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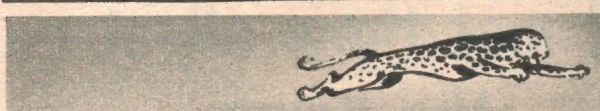

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EDITORIAL

Just blaming the other fellow won't lower road accidents

IT IS OFFICIALLY CLAIMED that the "disguised" police patrols who stop and warn careless drivers have reduced road casualties. Certainly there have been fewer accidents in Oxfordshire, where the experiment started and where it has been renewed for six months.

Here, surely, is a pointer to the proper way of reducing the shocking carnage on the roads—5,000 killed and 200,000 injured last year.

How to make the roads safer has been sensibly summed up in three words: "enforcement, education, engineering."

We have to wait for the engineering, because money, labour and materials to improve the road system are lacking. There is all the more urgent reason to press on with enforcement of regulations and education of all classes of road users. Otherwise neither the authorities nor the public will really deserve any decrease in accidents; there will be little prospect of a reduction in the total of nearly 600 people who go out from their homes every day to death or injury.

We all admit that most accidents are caused either by carelessness or by selfishness; we differ only about *whose* carelessness or selfishness is responsible. Therefore the rules which appear to tolerate these evils and the habits which cause them must be changed.

"Human beings," says the Metropolitan Police report on accidents in 1950, "are unreliable machines." Surely, then, the conditions under which they use the roads must be made as foolproof as possible. This has not yet been done.

Instead, there is too much disposition to "blame the other fellow," and to substitute denunciation for action.

A FAVOURITE scapegoat is the drunken driver. He is relatively rare, yet any case in which he figures causes an hysterical outcry. Meanwhile, far too little fuss is made about the countless daily cases of bone-headed stupidity and wicked carelessness.

Of course drunken drivers should be punished! One conviction for drunken driving which has caused an accident should end a man's driving career. But public indignation should not be reserved, as it is now, almost entirely for this one form of accident-causing.

Regulations against other dangermongers need tightening—now. Yet what has been done since the war? Besides the disguised patrols, the authorities have thought of one idea—revising and slightly stiffening the rules about pedestrian crossings, which are being marked with "zebra stripes," instead of dots. This may be an improvement—but while most people still cross a road anywhere except at the official place it cannot greatly reduce accidents.

Next to pedestrians, cyclists suffer the most casualties. Not only are they constantly victims themselves, but they involve other traffic in many accidents. Yet there are no rules controlling cyclists and no enforcement of any standard whatever of skill and care; there is not even the obligation to use cycle tracks where these are provided.

The cyclists' organizations actually resist any attempt to impose a measure of road discipline which might help to save the lives of their members.

WHILE that argument is being thrashed out, something could at least be done to protect children on wheels. In London last year one child cyclist in every 100 was killed or injured.

It should be recognized that ten-year-old boys and girls do not make safe components of a modern traffic stream.

There should be a minimum age limit for cycling on the highway—and it should not be placed too low. And there should be compulsory instruction before any child is permitted on the road.

These are examples of the more drastic regulations which will have to be imposed if we are to make any serious reduction in accidents.

But just as important is education—education of all classes and all ages; education of drivers, walkers and cyclists alike.

Fortunately there is already more activity in this field than in the others. The schools, the local authorities and the Ministry of Transport are doing good work to spread the gospel of safety first.

One of the best ideas is that of the Road Courtesy Weeks now being held throughout the country.

These Courtesy Weeks are good because they tackle pedestrians' habits as well as those of motorists. The necessity for this is shown by the latest London figures: thirty-eight per cent of pedestrian casualties were caused by stepping or running into the road without looking first.

More education for all, more drastic regulations and eventually better roads—those are still the only cures for road carnage.

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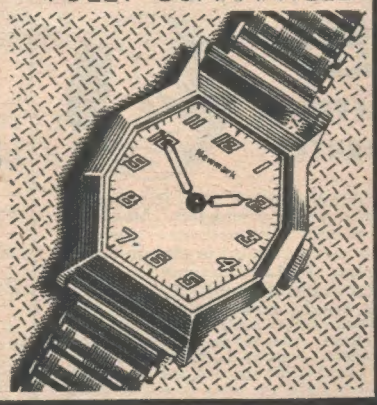

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FREE SPEECH

Britain and Britons—by two tourists

I HAVE JUST RETURNED from a three-month tour of Europe, including five weeks in Britain. We had wonderful service everywhere, but nothing could equal the kindness of the people of Britain.

Where was that coldness and reticence one had heard so much about? In London and in the smaller towns of Sussex, Somerset, Dorset, Devon and Wiltshire, and in the Lake District, we found a warming friendliness.—P. E. R. TEMPLE, Beaverton, Ontario, Canada.

. . . Courtesy and good cheer; Devonshire teas with strawberry jam and the most wonderful scones ever baked; a trip down to Land's End through the apple country (Oh, that cider!); meetings with boys of the village, some of them nearing eighty, and games of darts with them—these are a few impressions of an Australian's tour through England. Was it good? Gee, I'll say!—GEORGE F. SAUER, 15 Milton Street, Elwood, Victoria, Australia.

Price Of A Rescue

FROM THE BEACH I saw a man in a rowing-boat in obvious difficulty. He had lost his oars, and was drifting towards the seawall in a rough sea. I phoned a motor-boat proprietor who put out and rescued the man, afterwards presenting him with a bill for ten shillings. That bill was the meanest thing I have known.—DEVONIAN.

Furious At Mealtimes

I SPENT MY HOLIDAY in a small but quite expensive seaside hotel. I will never go there again. I and all the other women guests were furious at mealtimes because we were given very small portions while the men received large ones. After hours in the open air our appetites were every bit as good as theirs—and, of course, we paid the same amount as they.—MRS. N. E. W., Argyll.

Her Litter Lesson

SOME years ago, I was standing in a square in Hamburg, Germany, and, without thinking, tore up and threw away several bus tickets. A policeman approached and politely but firmly asked me to pick them up and carry them to a litter basket a few feet away. Feeling terribly ashamed, but knowing that I deserved it, I did as I was told. I learned that the police had power to impose on the spot a fine for any street offence, such as scattering litter, spitting or jumping off a moving bus. Reading the letter on litter ("Free Speech," July 21), I feel that such a law in this country would make for tidier streets and parks.—MRS. MABEL MULLER, Masons Arms, Crynant, Neath, Glamorgan.

Trams Ran Empty

HARRY HOPKINS'S DISPATCH from Hongkong (JOHN BULL, July 21) stirred memories of the time when I was living there and the Chinese put into operation the art which they have brought to perfection — the boycott. The Government had decided that Cantonese coins were no longer to be part of the colony's currency. The public's response was to boycott the trams, and for three months empty trams made their fruitless journeys. However, "face" was saved and the boycott ended when wealthy and well-known Chinese were induced to be seen riding in the cars. This was followed by a week of free rides for all. I had quite a number of them.—C. GERTEN, 20 Longden Avenue, Huddersfield.

The Anonymous Look

HOW I LONG FOR A RETURN of shady hats to protect the eyes, instead of dark glasses. Being a little deaf, I find it difficult to understand people when I cannot see their eyes, which so often speak with, or for, the lips. A face is expressionless when the eyes are covered and the lips smeared with paint; a deaf person relies so much on the natural movement of both, that she might just as well be talking to an inanimate object. And how much beauty

people miss, seeing the world without its wonderful colours. — EVELYN M. Harding, 57 Burnham Road, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.

What's Missing?

THESE WORDS from Noël Coward's *Cavalcade* came over the air: "Something has gone out of us and I am not sure that I like what is left." Not long before, I had walked into the local, and a cattle dealer said to the company at large: "Here's the b—— schoolmaster. Does everything for everybody else and nothing for himself." Service before self; is *that*, I wonder, the something that has gone out of us?—N. G. S. COOK, Wilts.

Next Winter's Coal

AS A HOUSEWIFE, I must disagree with one point of the JOHN BULL Editorial about the coal situation: no amount of clear thinking by the housewife can fill the empty coal bunker. "Store it in the summer" has always been the cry, regardless of the fact that most people get the same pay all the year round and that food and other essentials cost the same proportion of one's income in summer as in winter. Summer also makes its own demands, with fresh fruit in the shops and the children on holiday. The economical housewife can do nothing about the coal problem. Already she makes the most of the coal she gets, and uses as little electricity and gas as possible. She has to leave the rest to the coalman.—MRS. M. GREENWOOD, Liverpool.

Blacksheep Of The Family

FROM MY OWN EXPERIENCE, I disapprove of the complete freedom for children advocated by a reader ("Free Speech," July 21). We have four daughters. One was brought up by her grandmother, allowed every freedom and did more or less as she liked. From a small child, she has been a thief and a liar. Now, at seventeen, she is in disgrace. The other three girls, with whom we have been fairly strict, are open, straightforward and respect us.—PARENT, Hampshire.

Lester Piggott, Apprentice

ROBERT JACKSON'S ARTICLE on Gordon Richards (JOHN BULL, July 14) states that this year Lester Piggott is a fee-taking jockey. In fact, fifteen-year-old Piggott is still apprenticed to his father and actually rode in an apprentices' race at Haydock Park recently. Therefore, all fees go to his father, who arranges what Lester shall receive.—M. HART, 57 Mandrake Road, London, S.W.17.

"Correct," says Piggott's father. "Lester is apprenticed until 1953. He receives half his fees, which is the usual arrangement for apprentices."

Assault Course

MY WINDOW overlooks a railway, where a footbridge which was unsafe has been demolished and the line closed while a new bridge is being built. It is a source of unfailing wonder to me to see fully grown men determined to cross the line to save themselves a five-minute detour. Tall or short, fat or thin, they wriggle through tiny holes in the fencing or scale the eight-foot fence itself. The more determined even rip out whole boards to make their progress easier.—MRS. J. WEBBER, Jarrow-on-Tyne, Co. Durham.

Nylons For Men

THE READER WHO ASKED in "Free Speech" why men should not wear nylon socks might like to know that, although they are certainly cooler than wool, I discarded mine after wearing them once. Has he ever had a ladder in his woollen socks? — P. A. C., Middlesex.

The Meaning Of Flog

DURING A SUNDAY SCHOOL lesson, I mentioned to my class of twelve-year-old Grammar School boys that a certain Chinese evangelist a century ago was persecuted for his beliefs. "They flogged him," I said. Immediately one of the boys demanded: "How much did they get for him?" I was bewildered until the boys enlightened me as to their interpretation of "to flog" as meaning "to sell." It seems that if we are to get anywhere with the modern generation we must learn to speak their language.—MRS. MARGARET L. GILL, 14 Heathfield Avenue, Chesterfield, Derbyshire.

Letters intended for publication should be marked "Free Speech" and include the sender's full name and address. John Bull pays a guinea for every letter printed. Readers with personal problems should send inquiries (other than medical) to John Bull Free Advice Service with a stamped, addressed envelope for reply.

THIS WEEK'S COVER

IN ANOTHER holiday season cover, Douglas L. Mays looks in on a picnic by the river. "I set out to convey," he says, "that sparkling brilliance against the sun. It's a sight which I always yearn to paint."

Schweppes Ginger Beer

In a class by itself
In a glass by itself

—or with a kindred spirit

SCHWEPPERVESCENCE LASTS THE WHOLE DRINK THROUGH

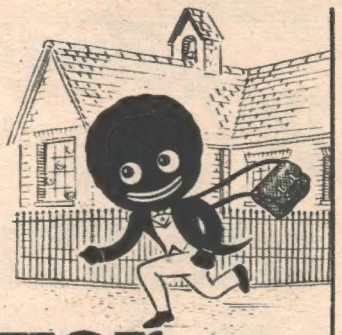
BY APPOINTMENT WINE MERCHANTS TO HIS MAJESTY KING GEORGE VI

"Look who's here!"

SANDEMAN SHERRY

"You'll like it"

Home we hurry
full of glee
when there's
Silver Shred for tea!



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Personna Blades are Hollow-ground *so sharp that they can split a human hair into seven separate strands, as regular factory tests prove. This picture is a still from a Pathé Pictorial film, taken at the Personna factory.*

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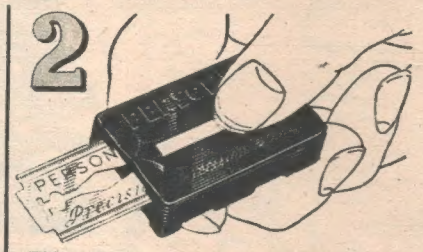

The quick, easy way that blades are changed. *Blades are* spring-suspended *in the Zipak — a flick of the thumb puts them straight into your razor, unwrapped, untouched, and ready for instant use.*

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Discarded blades go in the Zipak's convenient underside compartment. *Makeshift arrangements for getting rid of old blades are a thing of the past. And Zipak is a* safety *precaution— particularly with children in the house.*

4

Ten Personna Blades in the Zipak cost just 2/6—*the price of the blades alone! You pay no more for convenience, comfort and safety. Try Personna Blades in the Zipak!* **10 blades for 2/6.** Also in packets of 5 for 1/3.

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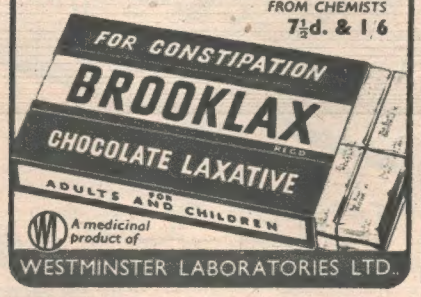

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JOHN BULL PHOTOGRAPH BY WILLIAM KEMP

Danny Kaye clowns with Jean Nicol—recalling the time when he did a sword dance around a pair of scissors and threatened to lop off her hair

Royalty, rajahs, millionaires and stars . . .

"The world's prettiest Press agent," Jean Nicol, begins a fascinating series about the famous people she met in her ten years as Press Officer at the Savoy Hotel. It is based on her forthcoming book

I met them all at the Savoy

by JEAN NICOL

"THE SAVOY RARELY ADVERTISES," Ronnie Tritton told me on the day when I first became one of the hundreds of employees in the great eight-storeyed hotel which covers more than two acres between the Strand and the Embankment. "But we like to keep our name before the public—that is the job of this department. The mother who reads that the Duchess of So-and-So has chosen the Savoy for her daughter's coming-out ball may very well come to us for her own daughter's party. The American who reads that business men, stars and politicians from the States have stayed at the Savoy will cable us for a booking, too."

Exactly a year later Ronnie Tritton went to the War Office and I replaced him as Press Relations Officer. By then I had learned that few jobs could be more complex, demand more tact, or produce more unexpected crises. But on that morning in April, 1939, when I first went to work at the Savoy—nervously clutching my mother's best umbrella—I little knew that within a few years I would be lunching alone with the Duke of Edinburgh and one of his friends, spearing sardines from a communal dish while I explained the mysteries of my job. For my interview was the start of a decade in which the Savoy was to be my whole life; I lived in it, I went to war with it, I fought strikes with it, I became friends with its most important visitors and humblest staff.

It was at the Savoy that the King became the first reigning British monarch to dine in a public hotel with the officers of his Marines; it was to the Savoy that Princess Elizabeth brought Princess Margaret for her first public dinner party; it was at the Savoy that, throughout the war, Winston Churchill was frequently seen arriving and departing, by car, on foot and even in an armoured car. On at least one occasion, he left the hotel on foot in the middle of an air raid. And few of these and other great occasions was I allowed to mention at the time.

Mine was a job almost without frontiers. Everything that happened within the Savoy, in the kitchens, in the private suites, in the restaurant, in the banqueting rooms, on the roof where the staff was battling with incendiary

Jean Nicol's work brought her into contact with the Savoy's famous guests. In her office—festooned with autographed pictures of the many celebrities she met—she chats with author Sir Alan Herbert

This meeting between Savoy Hotel guests Ingrid Bergman and the late Ben Chifley, Australian prime minister, was arranged by Jean Nicol. Another job—sewing on buttons for Danny Kaye

bombs, or down in the basement shelters where a miniature suite was constructed for the use of members of the Royal Family, and a blanketed alcove set aside for the incorrigible snorers—all might provide me with material for my job. My duties took me beyond the discreet formalities of the rest of the hotel staff and into the private lives of our guests, so that in time I, who had joined the staff as a nineteen-year-old secretary in the Press Relations department, found myself sewing buttons on Danny Kaye's jacket, introducing Ingrid Bergman to the late Ben Chifley, Australian prime minister, and arranging the wedding veil of tragic Carole Landis.

Danny Kaye At Large

Danny became a great friend and constant visitor to my office. I remember the day he tried to buy a pair of nail scissors. He had borrowed mine some time previously and I was making insistent demands for their return. "All right," said Danny, "I'll go and buy a new pair."

"There's a shop in the Strand, just round to the right," I said, laughing at his incredible golfing attire and the linen hat perched on the back of his red hair. "But you won't get far."

I was right. In five minutes he was back, breathless and tousled, having lost his hat. "There's a crowd out there," he gasped. "I know," I replied. "There always is when you're here. You'll have to send Albie." So Albie—Danny's chauffeur, caddy, general factotum and friend—was sent to buy the nail scissors.

I was upstairs in Danny's suite when Albie returned, bringing a whole tray of scissors and a shop assistant in striped trousers and black jacket who until then had, I suppose, been quietly wrapping up parcels and putting money in the till and perhaps wondering if he would get home in time to join the queue for the last house at the pictures. Now he stood in the palatial river suite watching with wide eyes while Danny clowned with his new toys. Danny put the largest pair of scissors on the floor and danced a sword dance; he pranced over to Eddie Dukoff, his manager, and cut off the end of his tie; he threatened my newly waved hair; and, when we were all exhausted with laughter, he bought two pairs and the assistant was sent away.

The affection which people feel for Danny is revealed by the gifts of home-made cakes, bars of chocolate and bags of fruit which are sent to him. "You will eat the cake for tea, won't you?" pleads a child's note, and Danny, moved, would like nothing better than to do so, but he never has tea, drinks only coffee for breakfast, often misses lunch and sometimes has his first meal of the day after the last performance.

My stories of Danny Kaye, of course, belong to the postwar days, when peace had returned and the stars had come flocking to London and the Savoy in a way that was not possible under war conditions. But in the days when I first took my place in the larger inner office with my feet under the Press Relations Officer's desk, I had my share of worries. "What exactly did you do at the Savoy?" I have so often been asked. The answer is that I did many things, but that my principal task was to act as a liaison between the hotel and the newspaper world. If the guests wanted the world to know of their arrival, I saw to it that Fleet Street was informed. If, like James Stewart on a two-day leave from flying duties, they wanted to be alone, I respected their privacy. In the world of the Savoy the visitor's room is his fortress.

Six Guineas A Day

Not a day passes without the arrival at the hotel of some person of eminence in the world. Royalty, rajahs, millionaires and stars follow each other through the revolving glass doors in Savoy Courtyard to be greeted by the reception manager and ushered into one of the elegant river suites (at a charge seldom less than six guineas a day) or charmed into accepting a lesser suite.

The reception manager's staff of twelve faultlessly dressed young men (each speaking at least four languages) is divided into two brigades: one, morning-coated, working from nine in the morning until five thirty; the other, in dinner jackets, taking over until eleven at night. The reception manager himself deals personally with the people who are important: Royalty, landed gentry, diplomats, golfers, actresses, cross-Channel swimmers, writers. For every guest who stays at the Savoy there is a separate record card, giving all the details that might be needed on a return visit. These records are so complete that they occupy an office to themselves and have a staff of twelve to keep them up to date.

Given Polite Brush-off

A good reception manager rarely lets an undesirable guest into his hotel. But most bookings are made by letter or telephone, and it is not always easy to estimate the type of person for whom the room is being reserved. On the occasions when an obviously undesirable guest presents himself, the reception manager, after one startled glance, does not falter. His smile is the essence of charm, his disappointment profound, but "there has been the most deplorable mistake: a clerk has let the room to somebody else." He is desolate, but "there is not another room in the hotel—however, the hall porter will get a taxi, there is an excellent hotel not far distant." And before he has had time to protest, the unwanted client has been ushered out.

Not even fire was allowed to disturb the calm of the Savoy. In 1949, more than a thousand hoteliers from all over the world came to London for the International Hotel Association Congress. Each of the best West End hotels entertained them in turn, and the Savoy needed the whole of its restaurant to provide them with supper after the opera. Hardly had they been seated than I heard the clanging of a fire engine in the distance. The Savoy was on fire!

This was a desperate moment. Yet the staff acted so quickly that the upheaval was immediately absorbed into, and obliterated by, the hotel's unshakable calm. While firemen unreeled hosepipes through the front hall and smoke poured from an upstairs window, the hoteliers concentrated on the food and drink in front of them, unaware that anything unusual was happening. Screening the tell-tale fire helmets

Journalists meet film star James Stewart. When he was a wartime flying officer in the U. S. Army, he spent many leaves at the Savoy. Jean had to organize Press interviews—and, when Jimmie wanted privacy, see that he got that, too

Gertrude Lawrence—Broadway star but firmly British—is one of the Savoy's regular guests whose likes and dislikes are never forgotten by the reception manager

and equipment from view was a phalanx of hastily summoned staff who stood solidly at the head of the restaurant steps until the crisis passed. Meanwhile, my assistant, Joy Boyce, and I hurried unsuspecting newspapermen round the corner and settled them safely in the bar.

The first serious crisis with which I had to cope occurred during the early part of the war when Ernest Thurtle, M.P., suddenly made a statement in the House of Commons that the Savoy was staffed with anti-British Italians. At once the newspapers started phoning me for the Savoy's reply. I promised to ring back in half an hour, and then took a copy of the M.P.'s statement down to one of the senior directors. It was a serious accusation. Not only had Mr. Thurtle stated that the Savoy employed anti-British waiters, but he suggested an atmosphere of espionage with military secrets overheard by hostile waiters.

Hundred Per Cent British

An hour or so later, I was sent for by the directors and given a reply to Mr. Thurtle. I at once went back to my office, telephoned one of the news agencies, and began to read:

"Italian waiters are not peculiar to the Savoy. All first-class and many other restaurants have Italian staff, though often British-born. It is, therefore, unreasonable to single out one hotel as though it were the only one with Italian waiters, and it is especially absurd to quote the Savoy, whose staff is over eighty per cent British and whose ownership and direction is one hundred per cent British. In fact, the Savoy is the only first-class hotel in London which owns, controls and conducts an exclusively British restaurant known throughout the world—namely Simpsons-in-the-Strand."

To my relief, the Press carried the statement in its entirety the next morning and another hurdle had been negotiated. My relief was mixed with real pleasure for a reason which may not immediately be apparent. The fact is that an hotel like the Savoy is made great, not so much by the guests who visit it, as by the staff which ministers to their needs. It is because Jack, the sixth-floor valet, serves him so expertly that Danny Kaye always chooses a suite on that floor; it was because head waiter Pelosi knew his likes and dislikes so well that C. B. Cochran always chose the Savoy Grill for his celebrations; and because the reception manager never forgot her love of an open fire in her sitting-room, Gertrude Lawrence would never stay anywhere else. The pride of these Savoy servants extends from the manager down to humblest pageboy—and all are convinced that without them the Savoy would cease to function. I was thrilled to play my part in the public defence of some of them.

Italian Waiters Rounded Up

Not long after the Ernest Thurtle incident, I found our Italian waiters in tears. Italy had come into the war and they were rounded up, the lucky ones mostly for the Isle of Man, and the others for the *Arandora Star*. The police made an extensive sweep one night and in the morning there were shuttered restaurants in Soho and depleted staffs in the West End.

Santarelli, the most famous of all restaurant managers, was gone from the Savoy, and Zavattoni, the fiery banqueting manager, had been taken along with his gentle-eyed assistant, Fortunato Picchi. Many others had gone, too. Santarelli, who was a British subject, was later unconditionally released and returned in triumph to the Savoy, only to die of a broken heart within two years. Zavattoni was drowned when the 15,000-ton liner *Arandora Star*, crowded with Italians on their way to internment in Canada, was sunk by an enemy submarine—believed to be Italian—off the Irish coast. Fortunato Picchi died a hero's death in his native Italy the following year.

Picchi had worked at the Savoy for fourteen years. He was a small man, and I found his mild manner and soft voice all the more marked against the robust solidarity of Zavattoni. His round face had an earnest, searching expression and his large brown eyes were those of a faithful spaniel. He never discussed politics. He had lived in England for twenty years and his hero was Garibaldi, whose words he had written out on a scrap of paper which he carried in his breast pocket: *England is a great and powerful nation, foremost in human progress, enemy to despotism, the only safe refuge for the exile, friend of the oppressed. If ever England should be so circumstanced as to require the help of an ally, cursed be the Italian who would not step forward in her defence!*

Picchi never expected to be interned, but, although he was now so English in his outlook that he preferred to be called Wilfred instead of the Italian Fortunato, he had not bothered to become naturalized. He was taken to a barbed-wire enclosed camp and found himself rubbing shoulders with avowed Fascists. Miserable and forlorn at his inability to take part in the world struggle for freedom, he found the next six months the unhappiest of his life. In December he was suddenly released. Volunteers had been called to train as parachutists and Picchi, although nearly fifty years of age and a martyr to asthma, had come forward.

Parachuted Into Italy

Sent to a special camp, he spent arduous weeks of training. Then, one night in the spring of 1941, with a small band of Englishmen, he was dropped by parachute into a clearing near his old home. The following day the Italians announced that all communications in Southern Italy had been interrupted and that foreign correspondents were to be banned from the area. London's Ministry of Information issued the bare statement: "Soldiers dressed in recognized military uniform have recently been dropped in Southern Italy, and their instructions were to demolish certain objectives connected with the ports in that area. No statement can be made at present about the result of the operation, but some of the men have not returned to their base."

Picchi was one of the men who did not return. At first he was taken for a British soldier and treated as a prisoner of war, but one day he was recognized. Picchi was convicted as a spy and placed in solitary confinement. For days he was grilled and tortured in an attempt to obtain

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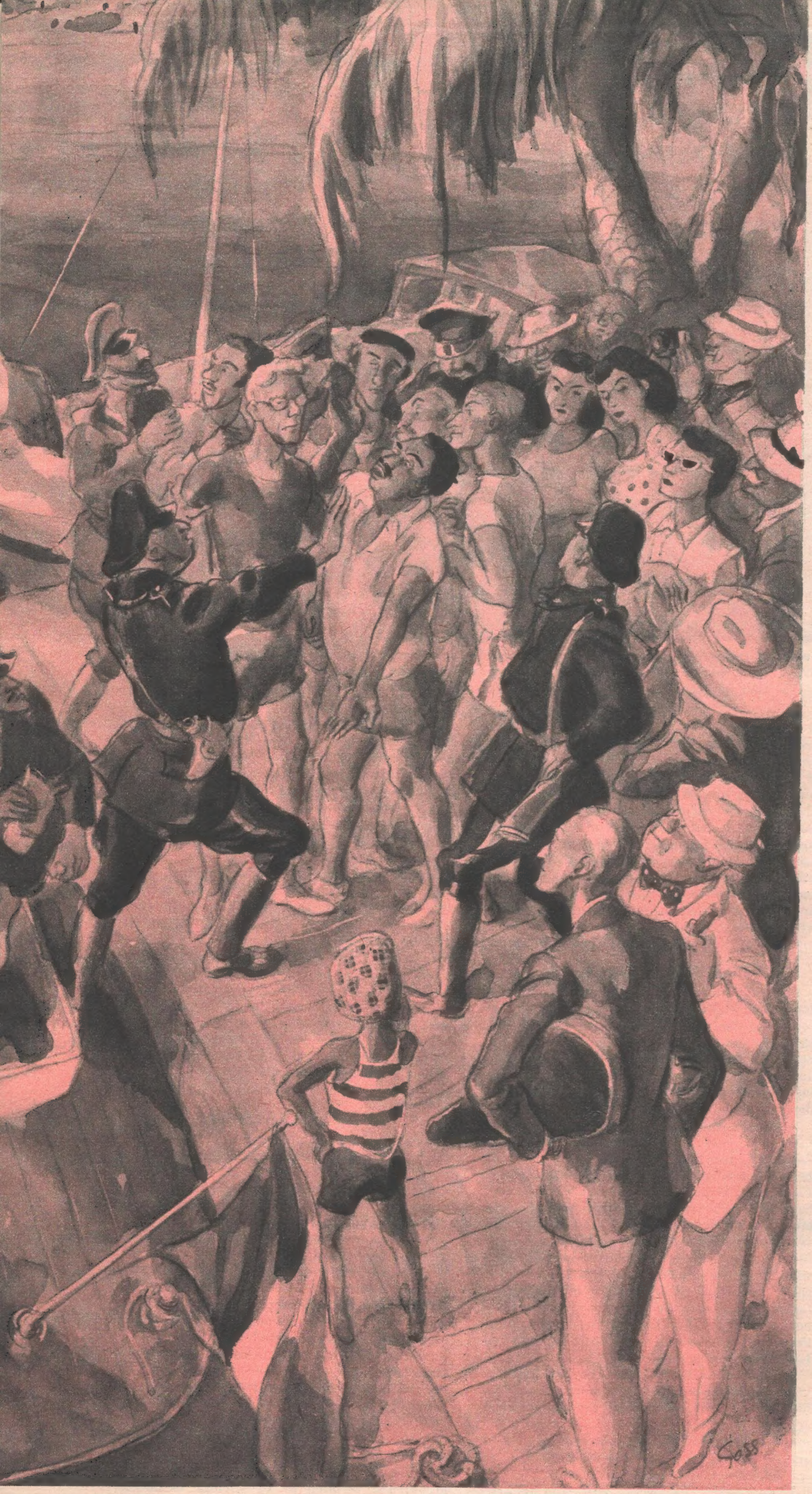

Ringed round by police and customs men, there was no escape for Lüttzow. I watched him helplessly

MELODY IN THE NIGHT

by ALAN JENKINS

ILLUSTRATED BY GOSS

There was a door in my mind this man could unlock, if only I could remember him. And then I heard the music

PONTE NUOVO IS A FREAK of international frontier adjustment. Barely a quarter of a mile square, it is a tiny piece of Italy surrounded by Swiss territory and waters. It consists of a Casino, a customs house, a landing-stage, and a few houses inhabited by frontier police, customs officials and croupiers.

There is a story that Mussolini got it by exchange with the Swiss for a less vital strategic point farther south along the lake. Another legend has it that Duce and Fuehrer used to hold secret conferences there. One thing is certain: when war finally came the entire population of Ponte Nuovo deserted to neutral Switzerland in a single night. One cannot really blame them.

It was gala night when I went to Ponte Nuovo. "Gala" means that drinks are more expensive, there are more acrobats than usual in the Casino Restaurant floor-show, streamers and blow-ticklers are sold at fancy prices, and fireworks are let off at midnight.

The roulette tables were disappointing: none of us could afford to play for more than five-franc stakes; and the hypnotic slick-slick of the croupiers' rakes would have sent me to sleep if I had stayed much longer. The fireworks, their brilliance doubled by reflection in the lake, were much better; and the floor-show was fine. It took place in dim amber lighting while an unseen band played soft unimportant music. Out of my tourist allowance I treated myself to a bottle of light-red wine called "Tears of Christ," and marvelled at the contortions of a muscular girl in tights whose body was painted all over with phosphorescent green, and a conjurer who stole a man's braces and read his mind at the same time.

A sharp crackle of applause: the lights came on so suddenly that I blinked. At once the band plunged into a quick foxtrot, and the floor was a forest of dancers. There were rich Americans who had villas nearby, business men from Milan with their girl friends, and a few tourist-guides giving some English schoolmistresses a good time.

Then I noticed the band. They were a versatile, motley lot, mostly Latins. They could play anything, I was sure, from a Mozart quartet to "Basin Street Blues." Now they were playing a tango, the leader curling around his violin as if wooing a woman. But it was the second violinist who held my attention. He was a fair-haired, studious-looking man of about thirty-two with painstaking spectacles. Most of

The German now tried the velvet glove. "Plenty of smokes in the British Army?" he asked

the band wore the fixed grins of men whose job was to spread comfort and joy. Only the second violinist looked out of place, and bored beyond description.

As I watched him, I had that maddening feeling of having seen him before. Met him, talked to him. There was a door in my mind that he could unlock. He reminded me of—something not entirely pleasant, something I didn't want to remember. What was it? What the devil was it? . . . There, I've almost got it—No, it's gone. . . . Suddenly a phrase in a tango echoed a bar in Handel's "Water Music," and in a flash I was away: the Casino, the tables and dancers became a haze, my mind was shooting back, back, back. . . .

BOXING DAY, 1943. I am crawling across the remains of a viaduct near San Cristofore on the east coast of Italy. Sixty feet below me is a river. The viaduct has been hastily mended by our sappers: some of the arches have been blown and there are only two parallel girders to hang on to. Rain and a bitter cold wind.

With me are two Highlanders whom I never saw until I woke up beside them in a hayloft this morning. Also a very frightened Captain of Bersaglieri who has volunteered to guide me to Paganica degli Abruzzi if I promise to make him mayor of the village when we arrive. He keeps calling me Signor Colonello, though I am only a staff-sergeant. I'm very frightened too, though I am not allowed to show it: I am supposed to be a leader of men.

About a thousand plans have gone wrong, we don't know where our units are, the advance has overrun itself, we only know we've got to go *on* if we ever hope to get a cup of tea again. We are all rather fuddled with wine, which we have been drinking copiously for two days.

One of the Scotsmen keeps saying: "Ah wouldna risk it, Colour. There'll be booby-traps. The Hun aye defends river-r-rs." But I make them go on, believing the river is all ours. I feel ridiculous: I'm not cut out for this sort of thing at all, my job is explaining the ablative absolute to boys of eleven. What on earth am I doing in this itchy battledress, responsible for these huge, harassed-looking men?

The wind drops. Desolation. Silence, except for a sleepy rumble of gunfire far away to the south. Suddenly a volley of rifle-fire rings out. An ear-splitting clang in the metalwork just behind us. The shock is tremendous. We fling ourselves flat on the girders. The second Scot bawls: "Don't shoot, ye bloody fules!" Is it our own fire or the enemy's? We don't know. Either way, they must be appallingly bad shots to miss us. We try to fire back. We can't even fling up our hands in surrender because we need them to cling to the girders. Funny: we're not scared now, we're just damned annoyed.

The next few minutes are very confused in my mind. There is an undignified scramble as we make the other end of the viaduct. Two of us are out of ammunition. The gleam of rain-wet square-ish helmets in bushes. Voices yelling "*Halt!*" A grey-green figure, followed by others. They're all round us: Germans. My Highlander was right: the Hun always defends rivers. Tension snaps: we feel only frustration and hunger and fatigue. We are prisoners. . . .

I am being interrogated in a tent, rain plupping down on the canvas. Shellfire in the distance, getting nearer: ours?

Number, rank, name, and then shut up. Facing me is a German sergeant with a thin face and large trustful spectacles, not at all like the villains on the films. With him is an officer in a uniform I don't recognize; he looks like some kind of policeman. Security Service, I suppose. They both speak good English. At first the sergeant does most of the talking.

"Your unit?"

Unseen, I have managed to take a couple of benzedrine tablets to give me Dutch courage. I say, as calmly as possible, "I can't give you any military details." Will they torture me for information? Old soldiers tell you: "They only knock you about if you look scared." Hope to God it's true. Wonder how I look now.

"Turn out your pockets." They take my paybook, money, cigarettes, photos. I've destroyed everything else.

The sergeant consulted a piece of paper. "You had better answer our questions. I think I need not tell you why. . . . Anyway, we know all about your unit already." He looked straight at me. "Your commanding officer is Colonel Birkinshaw. Your company commanders are Captains Smith, Redfern and Clair. Savory was killed at San Cristofore. Correct?"

"I don't know," I said. This was literally true; I hadn't seen my unit or received any orders from them since the utter confusion of the street-fighting after our disastrous landing at San Cristofore.

The officer scowled. "You are a pretty stupid soldier, I think. You know nothing." I went on staring in front of me.

The sergeant handed me some air photographs of the Paganica area. "Show me where your company was when you were captured on the railway bridge." He spoke gently.

I deliberately turned the photos upside down and sideways, looking as dumb as I could. "I'm afraid I don't understand air photos," I said. "I lost my company several days ago."

The officer thumped the trestle table with his fist. "You are a staff-sergeant and you don't understand air photos?" he shouted.

"I was concerned with petrol," I said irritably. "It wasn't my job." I jammed my jaw shut again. I was already talking too much.

The officer sneered: "In the Jairman Army all supply troops are trained to be infantry soldiers as well. The British seem to be using untrained assault troops of the lowest mental category." He stared hard at me; he was probably trying to sting me into boastful revelations. Unexpectedly he yapped: "What do you think of Germany's aims in Europe?"

Aha—the *morale* angle. I was prepared for that. I was getting bolder now, the drug working on an empty stomach. I said: "Do you really expect me to sympathize with them?"

The officer's reaction was odd. He compressed his mouth like a petulant child wanting to be loved. "I know. You English didn't like it when we annexed Austria. You can't realize that Austrians are Germans. Why, they speak the same language."

"The Americans," I said recklessly, "speak the same language as the British, but we don't want to annex *them*."

They both laughed like hell at that. "Ha! The other way round is more likely, I think! The English are only fighting now because the Americans have joined them. If the Yankees had been clever enough to stay neutral, we should all be fighting Russia together. Why, if it wasn't for Germany, the Asiatics would have overrun your little island years ago! . . . Your brigade has been abroad for two years. Were you with them all the time?"

As usual, the vital question was always in the tail of his remarks. I was determined not to be taken off my guard again. "I can't tell you that," I said.

The officer glaced at me whimsically. "Do you speak Jairman?"

"No," I lied. I had my reasons.

"Since you are in the Service Corps, you can drive a lorry, of course?"

"No, I can't." Another lie; but I didn't want to be roped into any active service against my own Army. I expected a rush of questions about Allied petrol supplies, but there was none. The officer was bored with me; he was just "taking down my particulars." He shrugged and said to the sergeant in German: "This idiot's no use. A dreamy student. Not worth sending him back to Rome. Use him as a stretcher-bearer." Then he went away. I congratulated myself that he had told me a lot more than I had told him.

THE sergeant now tried velvet-glove tactics. He wished me a Merry Christmas. He offered me a cigarette. "Plenty of smokes in the British Army, Staff?" he asked carelessly.

"Enough."

"We get twelve a day. Cigars, too—Austrian and Italian. Like one?"

"No, thank you."

The sergeant blew out a cloud of smoke and leaned back indolently in his canvas chair. "You know," he sighed, "you English take the war far too seriously."

"For us it *is* rather serious," I risked. I was rather annoyed and disarmed. He had charm. I had to fight an impulse to be friendly. He was like me; a civilian posing as a soldier, pathetically out of his element.

"Nonsense," he laughed. "Where are your

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Henri's holiday is shooting crocodiles

by JOHN HETHERINGTON

Tracking a cunning, man-eating reptile through a swampy wilderness is an Australian hairdresser's idea of having a wonderful time

Pat Weeks, a girl hunter, with a baby croc. Another huntress keeps one under her pillow

Two fully grown crocodiles are pulled aboard the boat by aboriginals on one of Henri's trips

MELBOURNE

RENE HENRI HAS ONE unbreakable rule: never trust any crocodile but a dead crocodile. He broke his rule last year for the first time—and, he swears, for the last time also. He still shivers when he remembers the episode.

It happened on the Scardon River, about fifty miles below the tip of Cape York, North Queensland, Australia. A party of hunters in a flat-bottomed motor boat saw a fourteen-foot crocodile sleeping on the river bank. A silver-nosed explosive bullet wrecked the creature's upper jaw, presumably penetrating its brain. The boat headed for the bank, and Henri sprang ashore.

"I'll toboggan this fellow down to the water, and you can get an action shot for the record," he told the others.

The crocodile looked as dead as a dodo, but Henri noticed that one of its eyes was half-open. He had been hunting crocodiles long enough to know that a croc is not officially dead unless both its eyes are closed. But the movie camera was trained, and he took a chance. He straddled the crocodile's back, kicked his heels into the mud, and man and reptile went shooting down the sloping bank.

Things happened fast when they reached the river. The crocodile revived and flicked its tail, bucking Henri into waist-deep water. It made for the flimsy boat. The cameraman, Vince Vlasoff, a seasoned professional hunter, dropped the camera, reached over the side and grabbed the reptile's tail. The crocodile broke free. Henri, still spluttering out mouthfuls of the Scardon River and praying that the croc would not come back for him, watched it swim a few yards. Then a rifle snapped three times. The crocodile stopped swimming. One of the bullets fired by the men in the boat had found the monster's brain.

"It isn't a very large brain," Henri says, "and nobody could call the average croc intelligent. But, believe me, he's one of the most cunning creatures alive."

Forced Skin Prices Up

Crocodile-hunting in Australia was the preserve of a handful of professional hunters when Henri became interested. Now it is fast developing into Australia's leading big game sport. Even the professionals, who spend eight months of every year living on iron rations in the mosquito-ridden wilderness of North Queensland, have profited by the change. Four years ago they were paid about 1s. 6d. an inch for crocodile skin—that is, the commercially usable soft skin from under the reptile's belly.

Now, skin fetches an average price of 5s. 6d. an inch. The number of inches is determined by the length of the belly skin. Price varies slightly according to the breadth of the crocodile, and therefore of the skin. The rest of the hide, hard and horny, is commercially valueless. Shooters can thank Henri for the higher price. It was his shrewd bargaining, when he and the other amateur hunters he recruited came to sell

Death scene in typical crocodile country.

the skins of the crocodiles they bagged, that forced the price up.

It is surprising that the popularization, as a sport, of crocodile hunting in Australia should have been the work not of an Australian, but a Frenchman. For Henri, a Melbourne hairdresser, was born at Nice, in the south of France. A short, muscular, dynamic man of forty-seven, he has lived more than half his life in Australia. He was a keen rifleman and gunshot before a Cooktown man took him four years ago to see crocodiles living in their native haunts in North Queensland.

"Do you shoot them?" Henri asked. The Queenslander shrugged. "One or two professionals do. Nobody else bothers. You have to know how to skin them and cure the skins. Then you have to sell the skins. There isn't much future in it."

Back in Melbourne, Henri found that anybody who wished to buy crocodile skin had to pay the city dealers 8s. 6d. an inch for it. He also found that there was a permanent shortage of skins. Anybody who wanted more than three or four at a time could not buy them.

"Up north I saw hundreds of crocodiles in one small river," he told the dealer. "If you make it so hard for me to get skins, I'll go and shoot my own."

"Why don't you?" the dealer challenged.

"I shall," Henri replied. He knew nothing of crocodiles, except that they were to be found in most of the North Queensland rivers. He decided he would have to study under a professional. But professional crocodile-hunters are few. Henri wrote asking a friend in Cooktown to find a hunter willing to take a novice as an apprentice. Six months later, an Italian hunter named Guido Juneo came to Cooktown for stores.

Juneo had lived for thirty years in the Australian bush and was an experienced crocodile-hunter. He was willing to show Henri the ropes. But Henri, he said, would have to

Henri holds open the jaws of a shot monster. At the tail end is Toby, the aboriginal guide

find him. "I reckon to be somewhere along the Annie River," he said, and went back to the wilderness.

Weeks later the small steamer *Elana* dropped anchor in the muddy waters of the Annie River estuary, 200 miles north of Cairns. A thread of smoke rose above the mangroves fringing the shore, and the *Elana's* master told Henri, "That'll be Juneo's camp. You'd better get ashore."

Juneo, Taciturn Hunter

There was no jetty or landing-stage, and the only means of getting ashore was to swing down a rope into waist-deep water, then plough to land through knee-deep mud. Two or three of the *Elana's* crew were catching small sharks from the steamer's stern. A few crocodiles were basking in the sunshine on the muddy shore. But Henri, having come so far, did not baulk. Carrying his gear, he made fast time down the rope and even faster time to land. The big question troubling him was whether the sharks or the crocodiles would reach him first. Neither showed the slightest interest in him.

Henri stayed six weeks with Juneo and his two aboriginal helpers. Juneo, a taciturn man, never registered any emotion—except scorn on occasions when his apprentice muffed a shot and lost a valuable crocodile skin. At other times, their relationship was one of almost parliamentary formality. For the first month they addressed each other as "Mr. Juneo" and "Mr. Henri."

Throughout Henri's stay, he saw no other white man but Juneo. The only whites, apart from hunters, who ever penetrate the wilderness are stockmen who go there perhaps once in two or three years to muster cattle turned loose to fatten and breed in a solitude chiefly inhabited by wallabies, birds—and crocodiles. There was certainly no lack of crocodiles.

One day Henri was paddling upriver in a native outrigger canoe, with an aboriginal for companion. The canoe rounded a sharp bend, and Henri saw two massive logs floating on the surface, dead ahead. He turned to shout a warning to the aboriginal in the stern. The aboriginal, eyes rolling white, shouted first.

"Crocodiles!" he yelled.

Henri's gaze swung back to the river. He was in time to see the two logs wake to thrashing life. The crocodiles, big fellows, dived for safety, passing under the canoe and all but capsizing it. The canoe swung in to the bank. Henri heard the crash of a heavy body hurtling through the mangrove on shore. A long dark shape launched itself from the bank immediately above the canoe and splashed into the river. It was another crocodile, whose afternoon siesta had been disturbed by the sound of paddles and human voices. Its armoured tail, swinging like a flail, barely cleared the heads of the two men.

Despite scores of mistakes, Henri learned the tricks of the crocodile-hunter's trade. He discovered that the crocodile on land is extremely shy, turning tail and diving to safety at the faintest human scent or the smallest careless move by the man stalking it.

But the crocodile is not timid when he is under water. Henri soon learned that the experienced hunter never ventures beyond ankle depth in a crocodile-infested river, unless he wants to risk being knocked flat by the tail of a lurking crocodile, seized while he flounders in the water, and carried off to the croc's lair, there to be eaten after a lapse of time in which his flesh acquires the ripeness pleasing to the saurian palate. No man is a match for a crocodile in the water.

Henri was beginning to wonder if he would ever acquire real skill as a crocodile-hunter when, hidden on the bank of the estuary one afternoon, he saw a creature like a midget submarine rise from the water and draw itself up on to the mud. It was the biggest crocodile he had seen—nineteen feet long, with a girth of seven feet, and weighing about a quarter of a ton. Henri watched the eyes close in sleep. The crocodile was only fifty yards away, a perfect target, but the man waited, motionless, hardly daring to breathe. It lay only a few feet from the water's edge, and Henri wanted the tide to fall before he tried for the kill.

He waited a full hour, watching the tide recede. Then he raised his rifle and sighted, aiming for a spot a couple of inches behind the closed eyes. He pressed the trigger. The croc trembled slightly, and lay still. Henri fired another six shots at the great reptile. It did not stir. He crawled towards it across soft mud. It was dead. His first bullet had penetrated its brain, killing it at once. His other six shots, fired under stress of an excitement which made his hands tremble, had all missed.

"It was one of the big moments of my life," Henri says. "Even Juneo unbent. It was the first time he shook hands with me. The skin we took from that croc's belly fetched £35."

Limited Killing Area

When his term with Juneo was finished, Henri had learned all the essentials of the craft of stalking, killing and skinning crocodiles, and also curing the hides. He returned to Melbourne convinced that he had discovered the most satisfying sport to be found in Australia. He went north again in 1949 and last year, each time with a small party of amateur shooters. On each trip he learned more about the tricky game of hunting crocodiles. His plans for the future include a month of crocodile-hunting in North Queensland every winter.

"It is true that the croc is a big target, taken overall," Henri says. "So is an army tank. But a croc, like a tank, has a very limited number of vulnerable points. The area in which you can shoot him with deadly effect is equivalent, all told, to about half the size of a rabbit. I suppose that's one of the things that make the game so fascinating."

The risks are also a lure for men with sporting blood. Henri's party last year cornered a crocodile, weighing probably as much as a small bullock, in a shallow creek running in to the river on which they were hunting. They rowed up the creek, blocking the croc's escape route, but he decided to force his way out. The men heard a harsh jarring noise, then felt the boat heave and shudder as it was bucked almost clear of the water on the croc's back. The creature's snout reared above the surface astern, his tail thrashed the water in front of the boat to creaming foam. It seemed that the boat must capsize and tip its crew into the creek, but the crocodile clawed free and headed for the river. A volley of shots struck the fugitive, but it had already reached deep water. Its body sank there, lost to the hunters.

Toby Feared Spirits

Superstition sometimes complicates the white hunter's work. An aboriginal named Toby once flatly refused to accompany Henri's party. He explained that his sister had died in the region and her spirit had entered a crocodile's body. He feared the party might shoot the crocodile, thus making him an unwitting accomplice in the destruction of his sister's spiritual abode. To spare Toby's feelings, the men decided to hunt on another river.

Henri has founded the Australian Crocodile Shooters' Club to exchange information. One of the women members is Olive Vlasoff, wife of Vince Vlasoff, owner-master of the steel motor cruiser *Tropic Sea*, in which parties of hunters go north from Cairns. She has a baby crocodile, eighteen months old and eighteen inches long, as a pet. On cold nights the infant man-eater sleeps under her pillow.

"Which," Henri says, "proves that Mrs. Vlasoff has a very soft spot indeed for crocodiles."

THE END

Jimmy said: "Let go of that girl's arm." Brandon flushed. "I'll trouble you, Captain," he said, "not to interfere between me and my daughter"

SHORT OF MURDER

by CHARLES IRVING

ILLUSTRATED BY NARRAWAY

You could call it death by natural causes, or misfortune, or even manslaughter . . .

I HADN'T SEEN old Morley since he was a medical student. He was a pleasant, amiable, inoffensive chap, and then something had gone wrong with him, a spot on his lung, I think, and he disappeared. And then, quite by chance, I met him again the other night.

We were sitting in the deserted parlour of a pleasant but lonely pub in a village about fifteen miles from the town where I lived. Morley had come over to see a patient; I had come over to see a man about a business deal. The infrequency of the local train service, and perhaps a certain liking for country beer, had drawn us, separately, into this pub, where we had now been sitting for half an hour. And then Morley said something rather odd. We had been chatting, lightheartedly enough, but I noticed that he seemed preoccupied about something. I asked him what it was.

And he said: "You know, I once committed murder—or maybe it was manslaughter, I can never remember which, because I knew what I was doing all right. It was expedient at the time, and I never questioned that it was the only sensible decision. But I think now that it was a *good* decision, a *wise* decision."

I asked him what all that might mean, and this is the story he told me.

You might remember, said Morley, that when this lung of mine started giving trouble, I wangled myself a job on a passenger boat. I got rather a good boat; she was a one-class ship, a bit old and slow but very comfortable, running to the west coast of South America through the Panama Canal. About fifty passengers; rather mixed, but there were generally some amusing people on board.

It was my second homeward trip, when I'd got to know the ship and the officers, that these people came on board. I think they'd been in Bolivia, or the northern Argentine; anyway they joined us at Antofagasta. Five or six of them altogether, but there are only three who come into the story.

I saw them for the first time in the smoking-room that night. The ship had a rather big

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Through Cheddar caves with Uncle

by DAVID CLAYTON

A caveman for thirty years, he guides holidaymakers through the pixie forests and colourful temples of the underworld

HAROLD CHINN, who is always respectfully addressed by the other guides at Gough's Caves in Cheddar, Somerset, as "Uncle," is tall, dignified, slim, soft-spoken and suntanned. By rights, Uncle, after following the trade of professional caveman for thirty years, should wear the look of sun-hungry pallor traditionally associated with miners, deep-sea divers, nightclub cloakroom attendants and others who earn their daily bread away from the light of day.

Instead, despite the fact that he has spent half his lifetime tramping with visitors at his heels through a hole in the towering limestone of the Cheddar Gorge, he has, somehow, managed to retain the open-air look of the countryman and insists, when he lapses into broadest Somerset for his own amusement and the entertainment of tourists, that he is "vit as va-a-rty."

By a little intricate calculation in the guides' room where they rest between the arrivals and departures of motor-coaches, the other six guides at Gough's, to whom Uncle is senior, have estimated that he has spent four and a half years of his life underground, and he admits that this figure is a "vair" one. His own favourite statistical game is to imagine himself the owner of one pound for every visitor he has conducted and lectured to over the years. "I'd be a millionaire today," he says quietly, "even counting children at half price."

Underwater Restaurant

This figure, too, is admitted by the other guides and is based on the fact that every year more than one million visitors descend on the little village of Cheddar. At least one in two walks far enough up the hill to call at the cluster of modernistic, pale pink buildings with scarlet cut-out letters announcing "Gough's Caves," and "Caveman Restaurant," which has a goldfish pool and fountain on its roof and claims to be "the only underwater restaurant in the world."

Of these, few can resist joining the queues waiting patiently to pass through the turnstile at two shillings a head, down the ramp to the cave where Uncle or one of the other guides waits to start them off on a twenty-five minute escorted tour right under the Mendips.

There, usually a little apprehensive of what lies ahead until reassured by Uncle that the 500 feet of cavern roof is not going to fall down ("because, ladies and gentlemen, there is nothing holding it up!"), they cluster round the small hole below which it is thought the subterranean river which first formed these caves now runs. It was here that the skeleton of the 10,000-year-old paleolithic man now on exhibition outside, known officially as "The Cheddar Man" and to some irreverent villagers as "Garge," was first unearthed.

From there onwards, until "King Solomon's Temple," the farthest chamber, is reached, Uncle leads the way with his flashlamp, switching dramatically concealed lighting on and off. He keeps up a steady flow of patter which those who have known him for a long time say has altered little in thirty years, and which he admits he inherited from the guides who worked there when the caves were first discovered in 1893.

"People like to use their imaginations, and I like to let them," he explains. "I stick to facts and let it go at that."

When he is dealing in theory he is careful to say so, and in talking about the subterranean river makes it clear that "it is assumed that," or "eminent geologists are of the opinion that" it follows its underground course right out into the Bristol Channel, and that it is responsible for the mysterious patch of sweet water which is found

JOHN BULL PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM KEMP

Deep under the Mendips, Uncle pauses with outstretched arm. Only a little imagination is needed, he suggests, to turn the stalactites into "Niagara Falls frozen in winter"

Gerald Robertson shows a visitor the territory he manages. Behind them are the goldfish pool, the restaurant, and the entrance to the caves

off the Weston-super-Mare coast. Through much practice Uncle has learned to draw every ounce of drama from such phrases as "countless aeons of time," "these ageless caverns," and "the beauty of this entrancing fairyland in Mendip's nether world."

As he stands with his charges before the fantastic and weird rock formations, beautifully coloured by lead, manganese and other metallic deposits, or before falls of delicately tinted stalactites and stalagmites, he sticks to his hard and fast rule of suggesting that "with only a little imagination" what they are seeing could be a "pixie forest," "Aladdin's cave," "Niagara Falls frozen in winter," or "the dome of St. Paul's," and feels amply rewarded when they give a gasp of agreement.

Uncle never hurries his party and this, too, is a tradition at Gough's, although, obviously, because the space is constricted and there are always people waiting, the guides have evolved their own ways of keeping people on the move to make room for the party moving up hard on their heels behind. Uncle's one rule, which he has imparted to the younger guides, is "Never let 'em get in front of you, or you're sunk." Using a little applied psychology, he asks everyone, with a fatherly smile, to please keep together. "Not, of course, that we have ever lost anyone in here," he says benignly. "Oh, dear me, no. Never!" Another pause and a smile. "Not for more than three weeks, I should have said."

There is a general laugh at this, but Uncle knows that, at least subconsciously, he has made his point and that from then on the uppermost thought in everyone's mind is not to let him out of sight.

A variation on this method is practised by Bill Channon, a newcomer to the guiding profession, who was once a regimental sergeant-major and still retains something of his old parade ground efficiency. "You can always tell when Bill Channon's party is coming up from behind," the other guides say. "It's the one advancing in step at 120 paces to the minute."

The grand climax of the tour comes in the "Temple," a magnificently vaulted chamber full of exquisitely coloured rock deposits, where the stillness is intense. Here Uncle operates a miniature stage switchboard, first to plunge the chamber into inky darkness and then illuminate slowly to create a majestic effect of a subterranean dawn. Giggles die in the throat as Uncle prolongs the darkness to increase the dramatic effect, and for a moment there is an unforgettable silence, broken only by the sound of breathing and then, as it becomes almost unbearable, the nervous laughter which follows some wag's request that someone should put a shilling in the meter. "I wish," says Uncle, using his customary way of calculating the incalculable, "that I had a pound for every time I have heard people make that remark."

Quick Kiss In The Dark

Still keeping everybody behind him, Uncle then starts on the return journey to the entrance, herding them all to the right so that they avoid the other people coming in. At this point, fond young couples have been known to lag behind for a quick embrace, which is usually interrupted by the sounds of an incoming party pattering behind their guide or, if it happens to be ex-R.S.M. Channon's party, marching with a thundering tread.

Gough's doesn't mind this and it has never been a problem, although the guides agree that for that sort of thing a ride through the Tunnel of Love at the funfair in Weston-super-Mare offers better facilities at half the price of admission. The stragglers who cause a headache are unaccompanied boys intent on getting two or three tours of the cave for the price of one.

They are usually sent in by parents who suffer from claustrophobia, are tired, thirsty, or have seen it all before. Having been reassured by the management that their child will be back in twenty-five minutes, they watch him go in with trepidation and then count off the time anxiously until they see the guide leading his party out again. Mild hysterics when junior doesn't show up are frequent, especially among parents who believe the local legends that there are miles of unexplored caves and plenty of bottomless fissures which, though too small to admit a man, could, at a pinch, accommodate a curious small boy. When the next party, and the next, arrive back without their offspring, parents steel themselves to enter the cave. When they come upon their flesh and blood playing a glorious game of hide and seek with other likeminded problem children, they usually release their pent-up emotion with a tearful hug or a resounding clip on the ear.

The Heckling Parson

On the return journey Uncle finds an opportunity to talk to individual members of his party, which usually contains people from all over the world. Americans agree, to his delight, that they have nothing to compare with Cheddar back in the States. Welsh miners, over on a day trip by steamer to Weston-super-Mare from Cardiff and Newport, take a deep professional interest in the rock formation and the passages which have had to be blasted away.

Eccentrics Uncle has encountered include a heckling parson who came regularly twenty years ago, hid behind rocks away from the main party and whenever Uncle stopped for breath would shout, "I don't believe a word of it" out of the ghostly darkness and then run on unseen to repeat the performance at the next point. Some years ago, too, another regular visitor, a woman, used to plead to be allowed to sleep all night alone in the cave so that she could talk to the pixies and leprechauns she was convinced came out from their hiding places to revel when no mortals were present. "She was a little tetched, I fear, you might say," remarks Uncle kindly.

As one of the highlights of the season he counts the day when he is privileged to accompany parties of deaf and dumb men, women and children from the Midlands who make a trip once a year to Cheddar. On this occasion Uncle gives his lecture to their interpreter, who passes on his words by descriptive gestures and sign language. Uncle confesses that as he stands there watching their expressions of amazement, their eyes growing ever wider as the story unfolds, he has to turn away for a moment. For hours after they blink their way out to the light he is a very thoughtful and thankful man.

On the subject of tipping, Uncle has long been of the opinion that visitors from the dollar area are not always the most generous. He is unwilling to divulge the biggest tip he has ever received, except that it came from a Lancashire Wakes Week charabanc party. The smallest, he admits, came from an American woman in charge of an American party three seasons ago, who pressed it tightly into his hand and said, "Thanks, Pappy. It's been really wunnerful." Then she turned to the rest and said: "C'mon folks, we gotta hurry. Don't worry about the guide—he's been squared."

When Uncle recovered he found he had been given a penny, but he bowed as low and as politely as he always does when he bids everyone good day and good luck. Although the guides have a strict rule that all tips received must be pooled, he was allowed to keep the penny as a souvenir.

Caves Cleaned Daily

Although visiting showmen, after watching the turnstiles clicking merrily, and the piles of florins growing higher in the pay box, have gone away depressed at not having thought of it first, the administrative costs are not light. The caves employ a staff of twenty people as guides, car park attendants and office staff, headed by thirty-nine year old Gerald Robertson, who directs them from an office set on a rocky promontory. Sitting at his desk, he has an uninterrupted view of the cave mouth, the turnstile, the 300-seater restaurant, which is let out as a concession to a London catering firm, the Gift Shop, and the strip of concrete promenade where photographers employed by the walking snap concessionaire stand a few yards apart.

It is to Gerald Robertson that Uncle reports every morning after he has supervised the cave cleaning and the disposal of the ice-cream cartons, caramel papers and assorted litter. With his booking records before him, Manager Robertson is able to estimate how the day will go, what space is available in the car parks, and when the biggest rush is likely to occur. Usually, this is around three every afternoon, when the narrow road is often crowded with a slowly moving stream of holidaymakers, the cottagers are hard at it serving Somerset teas, the stalls are selling paper hats, candy floss and picture post cards, and visitors are making wishes and throwing coins into a deep pool, despite the unromantic notice erected by the Bristol Waterworks asking visitors not to waste their money because it is an ordinary sluice with a water gauge and not an ancient wishing well.

A Schoolboy's Version

School educational tours, sometimes of 2,500 children at a time, are frequent. Uncle likes these tours, but he has some doubts about the educative value of his talks, because of the fact that his audience is usually busy with ice-cream cornets and bottles of pop. At one point on his route he usually describes a skeleton, reputed to be that of an Iron Age woman, 2,500 years old, which was found some years ago in the car park up in the Gorge.

"I don't know what it is," sighs Uncle, "and perhaps it is that, coming from far away, they don't understand good Somerset talk, but I would be a rich man today if I had a pound for every time I have heard one youngster tell the boys in the rear that it's a skeleton of an Iron Woman two thousand five hundred years old, who used to keep the car park with a man named George. . . ."

THE END

Barrel of the new rifle is held up by Janson during talk with Kent-Lemon (left) and Hance

Patient trio behind the Army's new rifle

by NORMAN PHILLIPS

When the secret of the .280 leaked out, it started a political storm. When it comes into use, it will make the British infantryman the best armed in the world

IF THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO WAS won on the playing fields of Eton, it is possible that future British victories may be credited to a frayed dartboard hanging on the wall of what was once the Royal Carriage Works. Every weekday between the hours of one thirty and two in the afternoon, three men hurl darts at this board. Their marksmanship is not exceptional. Their darts are of a conventional pattern. However, this daily game has played an important part in the development of the British Army's newest weapon, the revolutionary .280 calibre EM (for experimental model) 2 rifle.

The three darts enthusiasts form the team that invented the lethal EM 2, a weapon resembling a fiction writer's conception of a Martian ray-gun. The War Office decision to adopt the EM 2 possibly ranks in importance with Henry VIII's introduction of hand guns for the royal bodyguard or, at least, with the Army's conversion in 1867 from muzzle-loaders to breech-loading rifles.

A few months ago the secret of the EM 2's existence leaked out in Canada. Since then, it has become the subject of a political row on the standardization of arms. It has also offered infantrymen the prospect of a personal weapon designed for shooting—not for drill—and weighing twelve ounces less than the current service rifle.

Security limits the EM 2's description to the statement that it is "an extremely short, compact, light, self-loading rifle of unconventional design with an automatic feature." It will shoot faster, more accurately and, under adverse weather conditions, more dependably, than any similar firearm.

The Royal Carriage Works, where this unorthodox weapon was conceived, is now part of the Ministry of Supply's arsenal at Enfield, ten miles north of London. The man who insists on darts after lunch is the assistant director in the Small Arms Group of the Armament Design Establishment. His name is Noel Kent-Lemon. A tall ex-Army officer, journalist and engineer, he led the design team. The best dart player and the actual designer of the new weapon is a short, mercurial, Polish-born arms engineer named Kenneth Janson. The man who calculated the stresses and strains and determined the metals that go into the EM 2 is the third darts player, Sidney Hance, a quiet, firm-jawed senior experimental officer.

Working Out The Design

Until recently, weapons were designed by gunsmiths who worked out their ideas directly in metal. They would make a new firearm by hand and then improve the original model as faults appeared. Today, design teams make calculations first. The men who produced the EM 2 actually worked for six months at computing ideal dimensions and specifications before getting down to making serious drawings of the proposed rifle.

At the end of the war, the Army had decided to pension off the .303 Short Magazine Lee-Enfield Service Rifle, which, with a few modifications, was basically the same weapon first adopted in 1902. What the Army wanted was a light rifle of the self-loading type that would use rimless ammunition instead of the rimmed .303 round that had been in use since the last half of the nineteenth century.

The Ministry of Supply set up a panel of scientists and technicians. They knew it was not possible to make a lighter rifle unless the calibre of the ammunition was changed. After two years' deliberation the committee decided that a rifle of a calibre of .280 inches would be just as destructive at given ranges as was the .303. The decision was passed on to the engineers at Enfield.

Several teams tackled the problem. One of the first notions that Kent-Lemon, Janson and Hance decided on was to eliminate the wooden butt which has been traditional since the days of hand cannon.

"If I were a rifleman," Kent-Lemon says, "I wouldn't want to carry around a piece of wood that performs no useful function. In any case, wood is in short supply. We agreed to dispense with the butt."

This decision meant there would have to be a redisposition of the other parts of the rifle. The absence of the butt does give a distinctive appearance to the EM 2. "We think it's a lovely looking weapon," the team leader says. "It has a logical shape and we had no intention of making it look pretty. However, it did have to be easy to handle—and that it is."

As ideas came for the shape and mechanism of the new rifle, the team discussed them among themselves and then presented the theories for departmental conference. "Then we have a long argue," says Janson, who learned the armament trade in Poland before the war. After serving with the Polish Army in Poland and France, he escaped to Britain and for ten years has been designing weapons at Enfield.

Theories Fill A Volume

The team began building up rough drawings of their ideal weapon. They then started to make the necessary calculations. The formulas and theories of the EM 2's design now fill a volume the size of a London telephone directory.

Velocities, frictions and pressures were worked out on paper. Charts were made to show what would happen at intervals of a thousandth of a second if their dream weapon existed. Tremendous pressures had to be estimated. In any gun, these pressures run as high as 50,000 pounds a square inch in the fraction of time between the firing of the round and the instant the

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Lady in dispute

Concluding a two-part story

by ***MAURICE WALSH***

ILLUSTRATED BY KENNETH WYNNE

One man had already died for her. Jean would have no more of it. But the affair was out of her hands now

THREE MEN LOVED beautiful Jean Stokes: her husband, Colonel Stokes, commander of the English garrison; Lord Walter Hagan, of nearby Castlehagan; and Garodh O'Connor, one-time captain in the French Army, now a privateer living on his Irish estates.

O'Connor had met her when, after a riding accident, he was called in to reset her hip. His gift of bonesetting was well known, and though he saw that Lord Hagan—a deadly lady-killer, and an even deadlier duellist—was only waiting for the lady to be well again to take her from her husband, he could not withhold his aid.

He reset the hip, took Hagan, Stokes and two young English officers, May and Farren, away hunting while Jean Stokes regained her strength. And then, soon after they had returned and he had passed Jean as fit, he heard the news. Hagan had abducted Jean and her servant, Janet Robb—and he had killed Stokes in a duel.

O'Connor, bitterly angry, called on May and Farren, the two young officers, and asked them to accompany him to Castlehagan—as seconds, if necessary.

* * *

LORD HAGAN came forward in that jaunty, short stride of his, and O'Connor went forward, striding lazily to meet him. The two youngsters came behind, sudden anger brewing in them, and their teeth clenched against it.

The two Irishmen faced each other, and the black eyes and grey-stone eyes met and held.

Hagan spoke first, his voice reasonable and even pleasant. "This visit is a surprise, Captain. I hope you come as a gentleman not seeking trouble?"

O'Connor knew that the man had lied twice in one sentence. Did he want to be called a liar? That would be too easy. O'Connor's voice was reasonable, too, but the timbre of it had deepened.

"No trouble in the world, Lord Hagan, but I would have word with the lady who was my patient."

Hagan smiled pleasantly, and put his hands on his hips. "And if your patient does not need you?"

"Then I have word with Mistress Jean Stokes."

"Ah! And if I say no?"

"Then I have word with Jean Mathieson of Kintail," said O'Connor still equably.

Hagan chuckled. "You have an interesting way with you, Captain," he said, and his eyes half-hooded themselves for the first time.

And O'Connor said to himself: *He will do what is in him to kill me this night, making myself pass the death sentence, but he will take his own time to it.*

If O'Connor had made up his mind, so had Hagan. He nodded agreeably, invited with his foreign gesture, and said, "Come this way, gentlemen."

He led up the hall to the white door he had come out by, opened it and bowed the two young men in.

"There is brandy—and a print or two," he said.

They made no reply, though words were warm in them. They had given their word to O'Connor. Very well! Let him do his talking where he liked; they would act when the time came.

Hagan closed the door on them and turned to O'Connor. "We have no use for these cubs at the moment," he said casually. But his Gaelic was not casual. "I will be fair with you till the crack o' death, Garodh O'Connor. Come you with me."

"I will not have men fight like dogs for me!" she cried. "I came here freely. Leave me. Go now!"

There was the soft stamp and shuffle of feet on

They went up a wing of the wide stairs, Hagan moving light and quickly two steps at a time; O'Connor step by step, weightily, leisurely; and when he got to the head of the stairs, Hagan, along a passage to the right, was tapping at a closed door.

A voice that was Janet Robb's said: "Come ben!"

He opened the door wide and bowed. "A visitor to see my lady," he said, and stepped aside for O'Connor to enter before him.

IT was a woman's room, a lady's boudoir, delicate and pink in silks and satins. Hagan was not married, had never been married, but this was a lady's room, nevertheless, and, if truth were told, more than one lady, gentle or simple, had used it. The dying light of day came through two tall, narrow windows, and, besides, there was a subdued light from a brace of waxen candles in a wall sconce.

The lady was sitting erect on a frail-looking, gilded French couch below one of the windows; Janet Robb rose from a gilded chair at the head of the couch, and a gleam came into her bold, Lowland eyes. O'Connor glanced quickly at her, and she nodded at him in a brief, fierce way.

Lord Hagan laughed lightly. "Captain O'Connor insists on having word with a lady he calls Jean Mathieson of Kintail. He can have it in private if he so wishes."

O'Connor bowed to the lady. But, whatever words he had to say, he did not say a single one of them. He had not time.

Jean had half risen to her feet, and now she

e carpet. Spruce little Hagan, white-shirted, had scarcely lost a breath. "Neat work, indeed," he said, gaily, jauntily. "Again when you are ready?"

sank down again, blood in her cheeks, and her mouth a little open. And then her face began to crumple. In another second she would be weeping forlornly. But she did not weep at all. With a supreme effort she controlled her face and her breathing; and now she was definitely on her feet, head up and proud, a Highland woman.

She took two—four paces out into the centre of the room, and she moved with the swing of a queen or a great courtesan. Her blue eyes were wide and blazing, but now there was no least trace of colour on her face. One hand went to her breast, she half turned away as she spoke; her voice was fierce and low and anguished.

"Bah to you fighting men! I will not have trouble. I will not have men fight like dogs for me. I make my own choice. Captain O'Connor, I came to this house of my own free will. I do not want to see you. I will not hear what you have to say—I will not listen. Please go away." She stamped her foot. "Go! Leave this house! Go now!"

O'Connor bowed, not one word said, turned on heel, and walked out of the room, his stride still leisurely. Hagan, faintly smiling, followed him, and the door closed.

Down in the big hall, Garodh O'Connor waited for Walter Hagan, who came tripping down the stairs, still smiling. His hand made a half-point in his delicate, foreign way.

"You are satisfied, Captain—no?"

"It does not matter one way or the other," said O'Connor in his slow equable voice. "The thing I would like to know is: Are you taking the lady to wife?"

Hagan laughed teasingly. "Marry the lady, and I am forgiven everything! Should I?"

"Indeed, you might not have time to ask her," said O'Connor, almost mildly, "for I could be taking her away from you this very night."

"Is that the sort of man you are?" said Hagan, with some satisfaction. "I often wondered, you know." He flicked finger and thumb. "I did not give that for poor George Stokes. It was from you I took the lady away."

"And I am the man you wanted to kill?" O'Connor shook his head. "I came to your lure, brother, but you are wrong. Hate it I would to kill or be killed for the sake of a woman."

"I never heard you were a coward." That was a taunt.

"Cowardly I felt many a day on many a field, but a man cannot help his nature. I am cowardly now, too."

He turned, moved quietly to the door through which the young men had gone, and held it open for Lord Hagan. Hagan, for the first time, was not sure where the road was leading. He walked quickly up the carpeted floor to where a peat fire was glowing behind andirons. There he turned, spread coat-tails to the warmth, and waited for O'Connor to make the next move—if he had any move to make.

O'CONNOR closed the door, and examined the room with discerning eyes. It was a long, high room, part library, part armoury. The light came from the fire that glistened on bronze and steel, and from two thick candles on the mantelshelf; but hanging from the high, painted ceiling was a chandelier of crystal prisms holding a score or more of unlit candles. O'Connor looked up at it and nodded.

Near the fireplace under the candles was a low, winged chair, and at the side of it a table bearing crystal tumblers and a decanter of amber liquor. But the young Englishmen had drunk nothing in this house. They had not gone near the fire at all. They stood directly opposite the door, their stiffly held shoulders to a shelf of books, and their eyes were eagerly if doubtfully on O'Connor.

He moved a hand and spoke softly. "That did not take me long, and now I will not be long either." And he strolled loose-footed up the length of the room, his hands behind his back, and the peak of his hunting-cap held in a thumb and two fingers.

He halted before Hagan and not a yard away; and bent to look into the smooth face and stone eyes. Then he shook, and spoke in English so that the young men could follow.

"I am sorry for you, Walter Hagan," he said, and there was sorrow in his voice.

"Tell me about it, my friend," invited Hagan cheerfully.

"You have, indeed, many parts of a good man. Who in hell cursed you with two ravening devils?"

"Be as careless as you like, brother." There was no note of warning, but the eyes glistened like polished limestone.

"I am very careful, brother, too," O'Connor went on. "Look! You are an Irishman and I am one, and you shamed me before decent men of England."

"You will tell me how, careless or careful as you like?"

"Every word careful. Listen then! Colonel Stokes—God rest him—was my friend. We pledged each other in friendship in my house. He trusted me. He put his wife in my hands. But I failed him, because I should have known the devil that was in you. The lady's hip again whole, I should not have let her out of my sight till I had delivered her into her husband's

Continued on page 28

Stirling Albion, giant killers

by STANLEY RUSSELL

The country mansion footballers started from scratch only six years ago. Now they're up among the leaders

In a gymnasium that was probably once a Stately Home ballroom, Albion players get a lesson in tactics. Below: Tom Fergusson points out a flaw in the turf to groundsman Jimmy Duncan

WHEN HE WAS SEVENTEEN, Tom Fergusson lost his left leg in the first World War battle of Loos. In the second World War, a landmine meant for Glasgow dropped instead on Stirling, twenty air miles away, and blasted out of existence a football club in which he had a controlling interest. The first incident taught him to fight and make a fortune; the second brought him fame as the imaginative organizer behind one of the most spectacular sporting success stories of the postwar era.

With no worthwhile wreckage on which to rebuild his club, King's Park, he started afresh at the war's end with a new club and a new ground. The club, Stirling Albion, is one of this season's newcomers to Division A of the Scottish League—the highest grade of professional football north of the Border—and is famous in the football world for reaching this lofty perch only six years after starting from scratch.

Stirling Albion plays in the grounds of a seventeenth-century mansion. It uses the ground floor for football purposes and the top floor as flats for three club officials and their families. Sandwiched between are rooms used as offices by the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Works, and the local public health department. Officials and their guests take tea in a drawing-room dominated by a vast and ornate marble mantelpiece. Players change in lofty apartments that still retain an atmosphere of leisured refinement. The referee's quarters are in what was apparently a pantry; the deep sink makes a convenient washbasin. A room that was probably the ballroom is now the gymnasium, with a miniature football field painted on the floor for use in tactical discussions.

Outside, spectators sit in a corrugated iron stand that a short time ago was an R.A.F. hangar. The pitch itself was once graced by seven giant oaks and more than a hundred smaller trees and bushes. The ground, which holds 30,000 spectators, will shortly take 35,000 and can be extended to cope with 80,000.

This extraordinary change is due to the vision of burly, blunt-speaking Tom Fergusson, Albion's founder, manager and inspiration-in-chief.

Forty years ago, Tom had the average Scots boy's insatiable desire to kick a football, though his skill did not match his keenness. At sixteen he bluffed his way into the war by saying he was nineteen, and lost his leg a few months later.

"I came out with a wooden leg and a 12s. 6d. pension," he says feelingly. "They called me a hero, but nobody would give a job to a one-legged youngster. In the end, to get enough to eat, I had to go down the pit. When the depression came in the early twenties, I was one of the first to be put off."

Realizing that there was no hope of gaining employment, he decided to become his own boss. He borrowed £20 with the idea of buying a horse and cart and selling coal in Stirling from door to door. Friends said he was crazy, for it was summer, the slack season for the coal trade, and many of his potential customers were sharing his own plight of unemployment. Moreover, he had only enough money left to buy a single hundredweight of coal as his initial stock.

Fortune Built On Coppers

Handicapped with a wooden leg, he found the physical strain cruelly hard as he earned his living a copper or so at a time. But he had vision, and faith in himself. When he had sold his first sack he went back for another. Slowly, painfully, he scraped up enough profit to buy two sacks at a time and so reduce the waste of energy in making trips to the depot.

Soon he was able to buy his coal a full load at a time, and within a few months he had repaid the £20. In two years he sold the horse and cart and bought a motor lorry. Then he had two lorries. Today, from an office on the site in Wallace Street where he bought his first hundredweight, he runs one of the biggest coal merchants' businesses in Scotland. He also owns a big sand and gravel pit.

By the time he had his second lorry, Tom felt in need of relaxation. Football still interested him, so he founded the grandiose-sounding Stirling District Secondary Juvenile Football League and Association. He discovered plenty of small clubs anxious for some form of competitive soccer, and he gave up his evenings to arranging fixtures and his weekends to collating results and writing a column of football notes for five newspapers. Years later he was asked to become a director of King's Park F.C., then struggling to retain a footing in the Scottish League and keep some sort of reputation for Stirling in the football world.

"I had my own ideas about running a football club," he recalls. "I bought up all the shares I could to gain control, and in 1939-40 we had gone undefeated in our first six games before the war put a stop to football. Some time later, when my accountant reminded me that King's Park was going to cost me a lot of money, I replied that the best thing would be for the Nazis to drop a bomb on the ground. They did, next night—only they made it a land mine!"

With King's Park an early casualty, Stirling remained without senior football until the end

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Nell flagged her tail. The pups were sleeping snugly. The almost maternal expression on Cowling's face would have astounded his neighbours

Foster Mother

by DUDLEY HOYS

ILLUSTRATED BY WILLIAM LITTLE

It's not a nice thing to see a man cry—a man like Ben Cowling, at that. It was the first time he'd shown he had a weak spot

YOU CAN KNOW SOME MEN for years without suspecting their weak spots. Ben Cowling, for instance, with his thin, unsmiling face, cold, pale-blue eyes, and slow, deliberate manner, seems as tough and unemotional as granite. Who would have dreamed of him bursting into tears? And over a dog. . . .

That particular September morning, Ben Cowling had got up at five. He had good reason. His tenancy of Stonethwaite, in Lingdale, was up, and he was taking over Bankend Farm, in Iredale, from old George Todd, now retired and going down with his wife to live at Grange. The deal included 220 sheep at Bankend. They were waiting in the intake to be checked by Ben in Todd's presence, and Todd wanted to get away early. Ben's wife was coming along later, with the furniture van, and his hired man was to bring the tractor and trailer, and odds and ends, and two of the dogs.

The third dog, Nell, brownish, rough-haired, and what we call a cur-dog, had a litter of pups five weeks old. On account of this, Ben had decided to take them along with him in the back of his car. We knew he favoured Nell more than the others. What we never knew was the full extent of it.

It was a glorious but fickle morning when he started, with the sky a washed blue and a wind from the south-east. Summits tinted pink by sunrise, summits ten miles away, looked a mere stone's throw. That meant the likelihood of rainstorms now and again, bucketing down. Extra sharp visibility among the fells is a sure sign of these sudden drenchings.

The car chugged up out of the valley on its climb to Mart Moor. A crow would fly six miles from Stonethwaite to Bankend, and a shepherd crossing the fell direct could do the walk in three and a half hours. But the journey by road is all of twenty-one miles, since Mart Fell blocks the way, and there is nothing for it but to make the big circuit along its southern flank, turn north where it shrinks into mild foothills, and then east up Iredale.

It was a ragged old car, but it took the gradient steadily. Ben spared a second to swivel round and grin at Nell and the pups, sharing the back seat.

"You're not feelin' sick, eh?"

Nell flagged her tail. The pups were sleeping snugly.

"You'll like Bankend, old girl," said Ben.

Again she flagged, and again he grinned at her. That almost maternal expression of his would have astounded his neighbours.

Darkness was swelling up from the south-east, a huge cloud with frayed, inky edges. He was driving along the comparatively level crown of the moor, between the wide spreads of heather and bracken sprinkled with boulders, when the cloud overtook him with its hissing deluge.

He started his windscreen wiper, and after a

few seconds it jammed. Instantly the glass was an opaque cascade. He had to stop the car while he fiddled with the knob of the wiper. The thing refused to resume. There was nothing for it but to get out and give it a jerk.

He opened the door and stepped into the teeming rain, his head down. At the same time, Nell, uneasy with the urge of nature, clambered over the front seat and out to the grass by the side of the road. His head averted from the lash of the rain, Ben never saw her stir. He tweaked the wiper, set it moving, leapt back into the car and drove off.

Now the details of the next hour or two are partly guesswork, though we know Ben's side of the affair.

When he drew up at Bankend, the skies were still teeming. "Come on, Nell," he said, "we're here," and turned to grin at her, and saw only the three pups. That made him gape. He tried to work out what had happened, and guessed rightly. He had left her up there in the middle of the moor.

OLD Todd was coming out from the kitchen door, a sack wrapped around his shoulders. "'Tis a gey bad day," he said. "Come in an' have a cup o' tea till shower's over. Then we'll count sheep. What's wrong?" he added, noting Ben's frown.

Ben explained. Old Todd, with his thick shoulders, a short neck, and a face like a judge, said placidly: "You've nowt to worry about. Either she'll go back to Stonethwaite or find her way here. Her instinct to follow they pups will be gey powerful."

Ben was uneasy. Had it been one of the other dogs, he would scarcely have given it a second thought. It was their job to find their master, wherever he might be. But Nell. . . .

They left the pups in the car, went into the kitchen, and drank their tea. From the intake behind, rose a lot of blaring from the waiting, sodden Herdwicks. The rain had stopped, and the wet crag-faces on the fell breasts were glittering under the returned sun.

"What's yon?" asked Ben, jerking his thumb in the direction of three men standing by a wall below the breast of Mart Fell.

"There's a meet," said Todd. He pointed farther down the dale. Crossing a field came a pack of hounds, a flickering pattern of off-white, fawn and tan, the huntsman walking ahead of them. Several more men and lads appeared, clumping up the road.

"Ay, they're meeting at Birker, across t'way," went on Todd. "There's cubs up there." He indicated the higher tilt of the fell breast opposite, 2,000 feet of rugged ascent. "They're after dog fox. There's been fair slaughter among hens an' ducks in some spots about here."

Ben nodded. "Foxes been bad this year?"

"Not so bad as crows. Tom Lawson lost fourteen lambs last May. Made a crow-trap, he has, above his intake, an' keeps it going all year round."

"Oo, ay," said Ben. He was not really interested. He was wondering about Nell.

Little did he guess that the crow-trap was leading to sad trouble. While he was actually speaking to Ben about the thing, it held a dog fox. Before dawn that morning, the fox had left his mate and her cubs in the borran high on Mart Fell, and gone off to stock the larder. The scent of flesh led him down through the brackens to the trap. Lawson had baited it the night before with a dead ewe.

The fox nuzzled the wire, padded around its circuit hungrily, sprang on to the wire roof. The slots were too narrow to let him through. He gnawed at one with pointed, tearing fangs, severed it, and wriggled through. A few minutes later, his belly distended with meat, and a chunk of sheep in his jaws, he had tried to get out.

The attempt failed. Those bars baulked every upward leap. He padded around awhile, then turned to gnawing his way out through the strong wire.

Long before he had got clear, the vixen was waiting impatiently for food. She edged away from her sleeping cubs, crept to the mouth of the borran, and sniffed at the air of the morning. She hesitated, then loped off in search of a chance rabbit.

HIGH up on the moor road, Nell was swinging an uncertain head. First she stared in the direction of the vanished car, then towards Stonethwaite, five miles behind her. Doubt was in her puzzled yelp, and in her short, to-and-fro scampers. She stood still under the flail of the rain, a groping look in her eyes. Then she turned off north, at a sure trot, to cross the ridge of Mart Fell.

Skirting a crag where rotten peat thatched with moss gleamed green along its ledges, she came within close range of the borran. The smell of fox reached her, and her spine hairs bristled. She growled very quietly, and approached the mouth of the borran with a crouching gait full of menace.

From inside drifted whimperings, pup-like sounds that changed her menace to a listening curiosity. She cocked an ear. She was heavy with milk, and the physical pressure of it, linked with those whimperings, took her creeping gently into the borran. It stank of fox. But small, soft balls of silk were nuzzling at her. She lay on her side, and let them.

They sucked, and climbed about her a little, and slid to the earth. Satisfied, they slept again. Presently, when the laziness of relief had passed, she felt the return of the restless urge to be up and on her way. Reeking of fox, she emerged from the borran into a sunlit morning, and went trotting off diagonally down the narrow line of a sheep-trod.

Down at Bankend, old Todd was standing outside the farm with a pair of field-glasses. Suddenly he let out a squeaky yell.

"Fox! Look yon! Look yon!" His outstretched arm pointed a horny finger. "Can you see him?"

"Nay."

"Yon green patch. Right o' crag." The old man was almost trembling with excitement. "Ay, look, look! Here, take the glasses."

Ben grabbed them and clamped them to his eyes. The first moving object he picked up was the leading hound. The next was the fox. A fox with shorter ears than usual, and nothing much of a brush, and a coat more gingery than red-brown, and. . . . His voice broke shrill with agony. "That's no fox. 'Tis Nell!"

Old Todd goggled at him. "Nell? Nay, man. You've got Nell on the brain. Why should they go after her, when——"

"I tell you 'tis Nell. Do you think I don't know my own dog?"

Todd snatched the glasses, levelled them for ten seconds, put them down. There was pity in his eyes, and helplessness in his voice. "Ay," he muttered, "you're reet. 'Tis nay fox."

Ben stood there, his fingers curved and stiff. His mouth kept working, but no sound came.

Todd wagged his head. "You can do nowt," he said gently. "Hounds is that keyed up like —you can do nowt."

He looked at Ben, and looked away. What he had seen in those pale blue eyes was something he would not forget for many a long day. When a woman wept, it was natural, and easy to bear, though uncomfortable-like. But when a man like Ben Cowling started crying, there was something terrible about it. You didn't know whether to be ashamed, or start crying yourself.

Suddenly Ben let out a thin, piercing yell. "Nell! E-Nell! Cope, co-ope! Nell, lass! Turn down! Turn down to dale! 'Tis only chance. Nell, lass. . . ." His voice crumbled away into a choke. He could see the tiny brown speck streaking higher, towards the ridge. The hounds were flowing after it, and they were gaining.

NELL had crossed the spongy patch. There was pain in her breast, the pain of aching lungs. She wanted to flop among heather sprigs and pant and pant. But the nearby yowling bred a terror that swamped that want. She shot down the bank of a ravine, jumped the beck, and went tearing up the other side. She could hear the rattle of loose stones under lolloping feet and the breathing of the nearer hounds.

Without warning, she found herself on the lip of a crag-face, a dizzy, broken staircase of cracked granite, dropping away to a carpet of bilberry beneath. In a series of falling, slithering bounds she took the drop, breaking the force of it with odd jabs of her pads against the rock. Gathering sheep on steep places had taught her the trick. And the hounds behind, with their smooth pads, lost seconds in tackling that descent.

But her gain had been brief. Once clear of the crag, the pack came flowing after her, a tireless, yammering sluice, making two yards for every one of hers. Her jaws were wide, and her brown eyes glazed with exhaustion.

She raced over a fan of slurry, small, broken stone seeping with water, dipped over the brink of another gully, down and up, and was faced by the sharp rise of a rocky spur, a rib projecting from the angle of the fell. It was here she crossed the trail left by the foraging vixen. Her own smell of fox was lessening, while the scent of the vixen was fresh.

The hounds picked it up. They swung off at once, away to the left, pelting after the new, strong scent that led them towards the summit of the fell. Their yowling waned into far-off music. Nell, on the other side of the rib, slackened to a stumbling lope, then to a walk. By a solitary juniper bush she flung herself down, her breathing racked and clamorous. After a rest, she got up stiffly and began to trot down towards the dale.

Ben saw her in the distance. He made a queer little noise. "E-Nell! Nell! Nell, lass!"

She came lolloping towards him, her tail high. There was nobody about. He stooped down and put his arms around her. THE END

The trial of Victoria Lamartine

BEGINNING NEXT WEEK, JOHN BULL is serializing a new novel of outstanding interest. It is called *The Trial of Victoria Lamartine*. The author, Michael Gilbert —a practising lawyer as well as a brilliant mystery writer—has adopted the technique of presenting the authentic procedure of an Old Bailey murder trial.

While the trial is going on, the hero, a young lawyer frantically searching for evidence for the defence, probes the real facts behind what is said in court. The reader is presented with a fascinating dual situation—what is said to have happened, and what actually *did* happen.

So that no detail of the court scenes should be lost, K. J. Petts, the artist, paid several visits to the Old Bailey before painting the illustrations.

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TEN FOR 2/8

MELODY IN THE NIGHT

Continued from page 11

sporting traditions? Why are you answering my questions so cautiously? What does it all matter, so long as we get this silly war finished? Whoever wins a war, the world is never any better."

My head was beginning to ache. I snapped: "Then why have a war at all? *We* didn't start it."

"Oh, *no*!" jeered the sergeant. "You *never* start wars. You just let things slide until war is inevitable, and then blame someone else!" Seeing that it had no effect, he went off at a tangent: "What were you in civilian life?"

I nearly told him I was a schoolmaster, but stopped myself in time. He didn't seem to mind. He wanted to talk about himself.

"I'm a musician," he said proudly. "I played the violin in the Berlin State Orchestra. We came to England several times. I like England. I was at Cambridge, you know."

"Indeed?"

He looked at me hopefully, almost desperately. "Are you fond of music?"

"Very." I was thinking: he's trapping me somehow, but it's months since I had a chance to talk music with someone. . . .

"Not many of your soldiers know much about music," he said pityingly. "I don't suppose you can give me the name of a single modern English composer." What was he doing? Trying to establish my intellectual background? Finding out whether I was an ordinary soldier or Intelligence in sheep's clothing?

"Benjamin Britten," I said. It was ridiculous, like a party quiz. This, in the middle of a battle!

The sergeant sat up keenly. "What about Handel?"

"Well, what about him?" I said. "He's been dead for some time."

"Wasn't *he* an English composer?"

"No. He lived in England, but I've always understood he was a German."

"Ha!" The sergeant laughed triumphantly, whacking the table with a ruler. "Do you know, you are the first Englishman who ever told me that? I have asked every prisoner of any education at all, and they all claimed Handel as British. He was not. In my opinion, he was the greatest composer who ever lived, and he was a German. A *German*!"

I BEGAN to dislike the sergeant again. He was shoving German culture down foreign throats, as so many of his countrymen do. He hummed a snatch of Handel's little Passacaglia for harpsichord, then broke off: "How does it go? I've forgotten the next bit." Involuntarily, I hummed it for him. We both laughed. For a second I trusted him completely. I asked him his name; he told me it was Lüttzow.

He was pleased that I pronounced Handel "Hendel," in the German way. I ventured the opinion that Handel would never have been half the musician he was if he had not been trained here in Italy. To my surprise, Lüttzow agreed. We reconstructed Handel's life, came to his extraordinary love of England.

"Most Germans are secretly in love with England," Lüttzow said gloomily. He lapsed into sentimental reminiscences. He had been engaged to an English girl at Cambridge ten years ago. It hadn't worked out. He did not understand English girls, they were so matter-of-fact. He had never forgotten her.

I found these lame confessions very embarrassing. Fortunately the officer in black stuck his head into the tent and told Sergeant Lüttzow to hurry up. Lüttzow instantly became a soldier again. He flushed, and snapped at me: "Why aren't you wearing your Africa Star ribbon? I find it here in your paybook."

"I forgot to sew it on."

He frowned in genuine perplexity. "It is an emblem of honour. I cannot understand your attitude. You will wear it always while you are our prisoner." He gathered up the things he had taken from my pockets and put them in a large envelope, writing my name and number on the outside.

A stocky, vacant youth with a rifle came to take me away. To my surprise, Lüttzow held out his hand. "Well, goodbye, Staff-Sergeant. . . . I like you. I think you are a good soldier." I don't know whether I ought to have shaken his hand, but I saw no harm in it. Lüttzow smiled like a dentist after an extraction. "And don't forget—Handel was a German! A German!"

THAT was the last I saw of him, until, four and a half years later, I came to Ponte Nuovo and saw the second violinist in the Casino band. Memory is unreliable, and people look so different in civilian clothes; but I was intensely curious, and went on watching him. He was thinner, older, balder than I remembered him—well, there were a dozen possible reasons for that—but what was Lüttzow doing here? Why wasn't he back home in Germany?

The tango ended. The band put down their instruments and relaxed. The dancers streamed out on to the balcony where the gala supper was being served. I hesitated. Should I go and speak to Lüttzow, if it was he? It would be awkward, with the other musicians around us. The pianist was idly fingering little phrases from a Beethoven Concerto; like the other members of the band, he was a serious musician forced to play popular trifles for his living. An idea occurred to me. I walked over to the rostrum and said loudly to the leader: "I wonder if you would be kind enough to play a favourite piece of mine? It's a Passacaglia by Handel."

The leader smiled his regret. "Perhaps my pianist knows it," he shrugged. But I was not listening. Out of the corner of my eye I had seen a look of surprise, perhaps of fear, cross Lüttzow's face. The leader said apologetically: "*Permesso, Signore*. It is now our rest-time. Perhaps after the intermission——"

I caught Lüttzow's eye, but he looked away. Then I went out on to the lakeside balcony for the gala supper. I joined a party of people from my hotel. But I left them, after a while, and strolled into the Casino again. The ballroom was empty: the band had gone out, probably to have their own supper. I was about to ask a waiter if I might speak to one of the musicians, when I saw Lüttzow come out of a little door behind the band-rostrum. He had changed his clothes and had a hat in his hand, as if he was going home. Without seeing me, he hurried across the dance-floor. I strode after him and tapped his shoulder.

He span round as if electrocuted. He asked in Italian, "What the devil do you want?"

"Hallo, Sergeant Lüttzow!" I gave him a friendly smile, but, judging from the expression of shock on his face, I could hardly have said or done anything worse.

"That is not my name. You are

mistaken, Signor." He said this so violently that I knew he was lying.

"I'd be very glad to have a word with you," I said gently in English. "Could we go somewhere and talk?"

We went outside. The night was warm and sweet.

"Well?" he snapped. "What is it?"

I told him my name; reminded him of the incident at Paganica during the war, and of our strange conversation about Handel's music. I said I had recognized him and was curious to meet him again in conditions of peace. He said nothing.

"Surely you remember," I pursued. "I was the only British prisoner who ever said Handel was a German! You were delighted."

"Yes . . . yes, I think I remember."

In the darkness I felt him watching me mistrustfully. Suddenly he broke out: "Well, I treated you decently, didn't I? I didn't force you to answer my questions. I could have made things very unpleasant for you, but I did not. You should be very grateful."

"I certainly am," I laughed.

"Now . . . now you are in a position to make things very unpleasant for *me*. If you are a sportsman, you will leave me alone."

His manner puzzled me, and I told him so. He burst out again: "Oh, stop playing with me. Arrest me if you want to, and let's get it over. I'm sick of it all."

"Why on earth should I arrest you?"

"You're—police or Secret Service or something, aren't you? That's why you came here, isn't it?"

"I'm a simple English schoolmaster on holiday," I said irritably. "I came here to enjoy myself, and I happened to see you in the band. You treated me better than I expected a German soldier to treat a prisoner of war, and I wanted to meet you again. That's all."

He was silent for a moment. Then he sighed. "Excuse me. My life has not been easy the last few years. I have to be careful." Then, characteristically, he broke down and became talkative.

AFTER the battle of Paganica he had retreated with his unit. He knew that the Reichswehr was beaten and Germany lay in ruins. Most of his relatives and friends at home had been killed in air raids. His nerve had cracked, and he had deserted.

"There were many of us who did that," he shrugged. "We should have done better to give ourselves up as prisoners. But we had the idea of going north and getting into Switzerland. The frontier is nothing but a row of stones between here and Monte Generoso; it is ridiculously easy to cross at night."

"Why didn't you?" I asked.

"Some tried. A few who could get forged passports succeeded. They are there now, in Berne and Lucerne and Locarno, waiting for the police to knock on the door. . . . The rest walked into the arms of the Swiss police and customs men and were sent back to Germany. Do you think I wouldn't have done it long ago, if I had been able? . . . I have an Italian passport—I bought the cursed thing, they're cheap in Milan. But the Swiss police are too sharp, sharper than any other police at finding aliens with false papers. It is too risky to cross the frontier permanently. All I can do is go over the lake by boat with a labour permit and spend the day in Brissona when I feel like it. Or when I have business there—I play sometimes in hotel cabarets there during the season—as an Italian."

"*Must* you be Swiss?" I asked him. "Why not stay in Italy, as you have an Italian passport?"

He hesitated, as if judging how far he should trust me. His volubility overcame his discretion. He hinted that he was wanted in Milan for black market activities; this, Lüttzow said defensively, had been the only means of raising enough cash to buy a violin.

"In Italy life is terribly hard for musicians," he said. He was trying to save his fare to America.

BY now I felt pretty sorry for him. I think he sensed this, for he came a step nearer to me and spoke in a low, urgent voice. "Please; there is something you could do for me. A small, friendly service."

"With pleasure," I said. "But if it's money, I'm afraid——"

"No, no. It is my violin. The bridge is damaged. I cannot get it mended here in Ponte Nuovo. I want to be able to play it again tomorrow night, and I do not like to go too often into Switzerland——"

"That's all right," I said.

"In Brissona there is a music shop, in the arcade behind the Piazza Mazzini. If you would be so kind to take my violin there, and ask for Gina."

"When you get close enough you'll hear a real funny noise"

"Certainly. But how can I get it back to you? I won't be in Brissona after midday tomorrow—I'm going on a trip to Lake Maggiore."

His face was illuminated by one of the customs searchlights, and for the first time I saw him smile. I had the impression that Gina was his girl friend, and that I was assisting at a romance. "Don't worry about that," he said eagerly. "Gina will send it back. She will understand. I shall put a letter to her inside. We often communicate like this!" He laughed: the letter, he told me, was slipped inside the S-holes on the "belly" of the violin.

It was close on 2 a.m. Lüttzow went to get his violin from the ballroom, where the band had been carrying on without him. The motor-launch *Fiammetta* was already filling up with people, and the pilot was bawling through a megaphone that he positively would not wait more than another five minutes. Lüttzow reappeared in the nick of time.

"Here it is," he panted. He shook my hand rather over-zealously. "I shall hope you will come again to Ponte Nuovo before you go back to England? We must have a long talk about Handel, *nicht*?" He thanked me effusively. Carrying his violin case, I got in the *Fiammetta*. We gurgled back to Brissona.

Next morning I overslept, and did not breakfast until 10.30 a.m. A car was coming at twelve to take a small party of us to Pallanza. At eleven I remembered the violin case in my room and dashed up to fetch it. I had just time to take it downtown and get back in time for the car.

As I lifted it from the chair beside my bed, it flew open. The violin crashed on to the floor. It was an unusually heavy instrument for its size; I remembered thinking so as I carried it back from the pier last night. Now it lay on the floor, the bridge smashed completely and the strings quite slack. Luckily, the body-work seemed undamaged. Nevertheless, I was horrified at what I had done. I picked it up gently—and then saw something that explained a great deal to me. There was a tiny piece of silk fabric sticking out of one of the S-holes. I noticed, too, that the woodwork had a gaping split in it near the "waist" of the instrument; a split which had not been caused by my dropping it.

In that moment I knew that this particular violin had never been played at all: had never been made for playing. I pulled gingerly at the silk. A foot, a yard, two yards came out. There was something else, too. I prised open the woodwork. Inside were at least a dozen tiny packages. I did not open them; I could guess what they contained. Jewellery; drugs, no doubt; gold, perhaps; silk, certainly, folded and rolled tightly into an incredibly small space, the silk that is so cheap in Italy and so costly in Switzerland. I could guess, too, that when the violin went back to Ponte Nuovo it would contain other dutiable things for which the Italian *dogana* searched so ruthlessly when one crossed the frontier. Now I knew what Lüttzow was besides being a musician, and how he was accumulating his fare to America.

I SHUT the violin case quickly. What was I to do? What I *ought* to do, of course, was clear enough: hand it straight over to the Swiss police.

I hesitated. I still felt a stupid kind of pity for Lüttzow, who couldn't help being a German, who had made such a mess of his life and was struggling for survival. A man on the run. A man who had once acted humanely towards me. An artist in distress. A man who—liked Handel.

Then anger swept over me. The man had fooled me, taken advantage of my softness. Would he, in his present desperation, have scrupled to get *me* into trouble? Of course not. I made up my mind.

Hugging the violin case, I left the hotel and began walking down the dappled Corso, under the chestnut trees, towards the police station. The lake was a sheet of grey-green glass. I noticed an unusually large crowd at the pier, seething around a couple of smart customs launches, and heard a massed jabber of Italian.

"What's happening?" I asked a fat Swiss businessman, rubbernecking with a cigar in his mouth.

"*Contrabbando*," he said. "It happens about once a month. There's been another big round-up. They've caught nearly twenty of them this time."

I peered over the heads of the crowd. In the centre, ringed round by police and customs men, was a little group of sullen, dishevelled men in shirts and shorts. There were a few girls, too; among them, I supposed, was Gina of the music-shop. I almost hoped that Lüttzow would not be there, but he was. He was very much a German among Italians, and looked pathetically out of place.

A space was cleared, a constable snapped a command, and the prisoners shuffled ashore. Lüttzow, alone among them, held up his head with a certain defiance. As they filed past me, I unwillingly caught his eye. He stared at me with a look of bitter hatred. He had seen the violin case in my hand, he thought that I——. His lips moved; he seemed to be saying, "Swine." I wanted to run after him, to tell him that it was not I who had betrayed him, but it would have been too foolish.

There were a lot of irritating formalities necessary to exonerate myself, and a sticky interview at the British Consulate. I had to cancel my trip to Lake Maggiore.

COINCIDENCE is largely a matter of keeping your eyes open. I never expected to see Lüttzow again; I supposed that the Swiss had deported him to Germany.

Two months ago I was one of three British delegates to a European Teachers' Congress in Lisbon. As we sat at the airport waiting for the plane home, I caught sight of a violin case left for a moment on a chair in the waiting hall. The label bore a familiar name.

"B.O.A.C. announce the departure of their Flight 626 to Rio de Janeiro. Will all passengers please. . . ."

Here he was beside me, catching up his overnight bag. With him was a very dark olive-skinned girl. I touched his shoulder, just as I had that night at Ponte Nuovo. His lips parted in astonishment. I noticed that he was sunburnt, fatter. We had time only for a hurried handshake.

"I wanted you to know——" I began.

"Yes, yes. I understand!" Smiling, he fumbled in his pocket, produced a visiting card. "Please write to me. . . ." We shook hands again. The girl smiled anxiously, and they were gone.

I looked at the card. "Dr. Werner Lüttzow, Philharmonic Orchestra of São Paulo, Republic of Brazil." Of course, they'd given six concerts in Lisbon and Estoril—I had heard two of them broadcast.

And that closed the case of Sergeant Lüttzow. He had found his melting-pot, a deeper one than America, where race and colour and politics were all absorbed in a wild appetite for life and beauty, corruption was in the hands of specialists, and Handel was a citizen of the world. THE END

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SHORT OF MURDER

Continued from page 14

bar and lounge combined, which was known as the smoking-room; everybody congregated there, to drink or play bridge or just chat.

There was a great, broad-shouldered chap with thick, grey hair, who soon attracted everybody's attention. His name was Brandon, and I think he'd been in mines, or railways, or both; anyway, he'd been very much the boss of wherever it was he'd been working.

There was a girl with him whom I took, correctly, to be his daughter. She looked rather pale and washed-out—the climate of some of those places isn't too good—but I thought she would be a very pretty girl after a few days' sea air.

And then there was a youngster, who was the old boy's secretary. He was a darkish young man, with a long, straight nose and a bit of a jaw on him. I was told he was very good at his job.

It was obvious that the old man had both these two absolutely under his thumb. I can give you an example, because I was sitting quite near them that first night in the smoking-room after dinner. The girl said something which I didn't catch, and her father turned and looked at her.

"If you don't take care," he said—quietly, but I heard him, and so did one or two other people—"you'll be getting as neurotic as your mother was. You imagine these headaches of yours. Stay here. You can go down to bed when I go."

It was the tone, as much as the words, that showed me how the land lay. He didn't try to bully the girl; he didn't need to. She'd been obeying him for so long that it was automatic.

The young secretary had been downstairs to fetch the old man something, and he came back at that moment and sat down at their table. A steward came hurrying up to collect their empty glasses. The old boy ordered a whisky for himself; nothing for the girl or the secretary. The secretary called the steward back, and said: "A whisky for me, please, too." Then he turned to the girl. "What would you——"

The old man's look stopped him in mid-sentence. "Phyllis has a headache," he said, still quietly, "and she'd be better without anything. And you, Thompson, will stay sober on this trip, and be ready to work when I want you—day *or* night. That'll do, steward; just one whisky, please."

And that was that. It didn't occur to me at the time that there was anything between the girl, Phyllis, and the young man, Thompson. But what did strike me, that first night, was that the old boy might be requiring professional attention before the end of the run. He didn't look as if he'd ever stinted himself in anything; in fact he looked a typical high blood-pressure, hardening-artery case whose heart might give him a bit of trouble before long.

Well, we pushed on up the coast, and everyone went ashore at Callao and up to Lima, and it got warmer as we got nearer the Canal; and the girl got back her complexion and began to enjoy life a little, and by the time we reached Panama she was the prettiest young thing on board. Naturally, she was much sought after. At first, young Thompson made most of the running; but the old man soon put a stop to most of that by hauling Thompson off to his stateroom to work just when he'd started a set of deck tennis with Phyllis, or in the middle of the morning round of drinks. He did it deliberately, of course. I don't think he wanted his daughter to marry anybody; he certainly didn't want her to marry his secretary.

When Thompson wasn't around, the girl was often to be found with the second officer, a red-haired fellow called Jock Callander.

The ship had a small games deck, aft of the smokeroom. More than once I saw Phyllis begin a game of quoits or deck tennis; and within five minutes a steward would appear, sent by the old man, who was sitting just inside the smokeroom, and tell her that her father wanted her. She would go immediately. He didn't want her, of course; he just hated to see her enjoying herself. He wasn't a popular man.

He made himself even more unpopular with the ship's company, from the captain downwards. He started this at Colon. It's at the eastern end of the Canal; and it does a good trade in the rather naughty kind of cabaret show, at nights. The old man had arranged to go, with one or two hangers-on from among the other passengers. He'd expressly forbidden his daughter to go ashore at all at Colon; and he'd told Thompson to stay and deal with some long and complicated engineering report, and have it ready for him the next morning.

Well, what happened was this. We'd been a bit late out of Valparaiso to begin with, and we'd lost more time calling at some minor Peruvian port for cargo, and arrived at the Pacific end of the Canal rather late, missing our chance of getting through that day. We anchored off Panama, and it was announced that we would go through as early as possible the next day, make a short call at Colon, and be away by teatime—no cabarets for anybody, in other words.

The old man went off the deep end. He got hold of the chief officer, Edgar White, a silent man who hated passengers, and he played hell. He said he'd paid his passage on the understanding that the boat called at this

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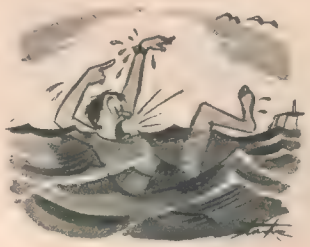

SO you've got seawater into your watch? No need to despair. Get it to the repairer within a few hours—and certainly no later than two days—and he'll clean it as new before rust and corrosion set in. If you delay, rust will play havoc inside, especially with the all-important hairspring.

But what if you are delayed? Well, soak your watch in a light oil such as paraffin or olive oil. This may retard corrosion—but it's only first aid. It's still urgent to visit the repairer.

and that and the other place "for sightseeing," and he was going to insist that we didn't leave Panama until midnight, and if that wasn't done, well, he knew several directors of the company and he'd have the captain and all the officers sacked and start a law action if necessary.

As it happened, I was in Captain Clarke's cabin, discussing something or other, when Edgar White came in. Jimmy Clarke is a slender man, with keen blue eyes and hair which is still almost black. Off duty, he's as mild and amiable as a maiden aunt; in matters affecting his ship, he's as rigid as steel. He listened to Edgar, nodding now and again; then he thought for a minute and said he'd deal with it himself if Mr. Brandon would be kind enough to step up to his cabin. He looked at me, and I left. I would have liked to have stayed.

Half an hour later I was called to Brandon's cabin. I had been right enough about his blood pressure and all the rest of it. I thought he was going to have a stroke. He was boiling with rage, and when he could find breath his remarks were unprintable, in spite of the fact that his daughter was there.

I ordered him a day in bed, and managed to frighten him into obeying.

As soon as we were in the Caribbean on the homeward run, and nearing Jamaica, the purser got some of the passengers into the smoking-room to elect a sports committee. As a rule, Jimmy Clarke and the purser would sit down at the big table in the centre and ask the passengers to elect a chairman. This chairman would then sit down, rather blushingly, between them and conduct the proceedings from then on, with a lot of prompting from the purser.

This time they didn't get a chance. They were just sitting down when old man Brandon came breezing in and sat down at the big table. He said: "Well, ladies and gentlemen, we're here to elect a sports committee. Now we don't want to waste a lot of time, and I've drafted out a sort of rough list of proposals which I hope you'll agree with. I'll read it through, and then if anyone's got anything to say he can say it."

THE purser was clean out of his depth, but Jimmy Clarke stood up quietly and said: "I think, ladies and gentlemen, the first thing we have to do is to elect a chairman. Has anyone any suggestions?"

The purser was so staggered that, before he could speak, some sycophant said: "I propose Mr. Brandon as chairman."

"Will someone second that?" asked Jimmy, in a tone of voice which made it quite clear he didn't want to see anybody try.

Old man Brandon's jaw set hard and he stared at young Thompson in a quite unmistakable way. Thompson looked undecided and rather miserable; it was quite clear what his employer wanted him to do. There was silence for several seconds, and I was near enough to see that Thompson and the girl were holding hands.

In the end, some other sycophantic ass—you always find some people who are impressed by self-importance—said: "I second Mr. Brandon."

Brandon got himself elected all right, but after lunch it went round the ship like lightning—the way things do—that old man Brandon had fired his secretary. He had also forbidden his daughter to speak to Thompson. Thompson didn't take it very well; he sulked. Nobody

"We saved close on £50 last year, dear. Of course, we spent it all"

blamed him very much; but the matchmakers on board began to lay odds on Callander.

The night before we got to Bermuda I was taking a stroll on deck, quite late. I saw two figures by the rail, and wondered casually who they were. It so happened that as I approached they turned and began to walk towards me. They crossed a patch of light, and I saw they were Phyllis and Thompson. I was just thinking it was a bit rash when one of the smokeroom doorways opened and out stepped old man Brandon—smack into them.

He didn't say anything for a minute; he just stepped forward and took the girl by the arm. I saw her wince; he had a grip like a vice. Then he turned on Thompson. "Will you be good enough," he said, icily, "to go down to your damned cabin, and stay there?"

Thompson looked like standing his ground, but the girl said something I didn't catch. He hesitated for a moment, and then went into the smokeroom. The girl said: "Father, you're hurting me!"

Brandon did not let go of her arm. "Didn't I tell you under no circumstances to talk to that young man? Didn't I?"

"Father, you never let me talk to anyone! I don't see why, for once, I shouldn't be able to—Father!"

He was twisting her arm. They hadn't seen me, but I stepped forward; this wasn't good enough. Then I stopped. I had seen someone else approaching: Jimmy Clarke, the captain, doing his nightly prowl.

He saw what I had seen and came up to them very quickly. The girl was biting her lip and moaning slightly; he was really hurting her. Jimmy said: "Let go of that girl's arm, sir!"

Brandon didn't let go, but he stopped twisting it. "I'll trouble you, Captain," he said between his teeth—he was very angry—"not to interfere between me and my daughter."

"Your family affairs are no concern of mine," said Jimmy, "but I will not have anyone physically ill-treated on this ship. Let her go, sir!"

They stood, looking at one another. Brandon was flushed and glaring; Jimmy looked outwardly calm, but I knew the signs.

"You may be captain of this ship," said Brandon, "but, by God, if you meddle with my affairs——" There was a kind of stifled scream from the girl; he must have tightened his grip again, in his rage.

"Take your hands off this girl, sir, and go below at once," Jimmy barked. "Immediately, or I'll have you in irons!"

He meant it; and Brandon, who was no fool, knew that he meant it. He released the girl, and said thickly: "You'll regret this, Captain Clarke!" Then he went away. The captain took the girl gently by the arm and led her up for'ard.

AFTER Bermuda, two things happened. It began to blow a bit, the way it can, even in summer; and old Brandon was taken ill. It wasn't blood pressure, as one might have expected; it was a very bad intestinal obstruction and I had to do a colostomy. It wasn't an easy operation, because the weather was getting worse all the time and by the time I'd decided I had to operate the old tub was wallowing and rolling quite a bit.

He seemed all right after the operation; then he began to develop the usual symptoms—temperature, rapid pulse, knees drawn up nearly to his chin and that anxious expression they always have—and I knew it had turned to peritonitis.

Our next call was Corunna, and I had a faint hope of getting him ashore there and doing the job properly. But that night I saw it was hopeless, with his condition not too good to start with, owing to his blood pressure and a slightly doubtful heart. I knew that I would be forced to operate again within the next hour or two to have any chance of saving him.

I told my steward to get him ready, and went along to my cabin to get some things I needed. While I was there a message came from Jimmy that he wanted to see me urgently. I sent back word that I had an urgent operation, but would be with him as soon as I could. Then I went along to the hospital.

The old ship was banging about in great style, rolling continually, pitching occasionally. I wasn't looking forward to this job at all; but I had another look at Brandon as he lay on the table and I knew I had to try it. He couldn't last much longer.

I was just about ready to begin when there was a knock at the door, and Jimmy came in. He didn't generally mind a bit of bad weather, but he looked now as if he was in one of his worst moods. He came up to us and said: "Is this urgent, Doc?"

"Yes," I said. "Damned urgent."

"Well, you'll have to leave it a moment and come and see to Callander."

"Callander? What's happened?"

"I think his back may be broken. He was flung across the deck and fetched up against a winch. I've got him in my cabin. Can't move his legs and his breathing's bad."

I looked at Jimmy, and then I looked at Brandon on the table. "You know," I said, "if I don't tackle this now he'll almost certainly die."

"And if you don't get to Callander quick, I should think *he'll* almost certainly die, by the look of him."

"Well, I can't be in two places at once," I said. The whole thing had got me into a pretty bad temper by now. "I'll be as quick as I can."

"What's that mean?"

"An hour to an hour and a half."

"Not good enough. Callander's in great pain."

"Well, this fellow isn't exactly comfortable." Actually he was pretty nearly unconscious; but I shall never know whether he could hear us talking or not. "Aren't we supposed to see to passengers first? Isn't there some regulation?"

Jimmy was silent. He stood staring at Brandon, and I didn't quite like the look on his face. The ship went on creaking and wallowing about. Brandon was strapped on, of course, but he shifted a little on the table as she rolled. After about a minute and a half Jimmy said, quite quietly: "Go up to my cabin immediately, Doctor, and see to Callander. That is an order, and the responsibility is mine!"

Leaving old Brandon just then was nothing short of murder—I knew that all right. I could have refused. I could have pleaded—once we got on shore—that I must judge which patient should come first, and not the captain. And I would have been right. I didn't do that. I looked at Jimmy and made a quick decision. And I went.

Callander was in a very bad way. When we got him sorted out we found he had a cracked vertebra, three ribs broken—one of which had pierced the lung—and a bad femoral fracture. He was tough; but for a time I was afraid he would die from shock. We got him roughly patched up and comfortable; I put him in plaster later, and he was fit again in six months. But when I went down, after doing what I could for him on the spot, to look at Brandon again, I knew it was hopeless. I operated, of course; but he died within an hour.

The girl never knew, of course, what had gone on; she was genuinely upset at her father's death. And Jimmy retired at the end of that voyage, and got a shore job; he was young for a captain, but he'd saved quite a bit.

MORLEY seemed to have finished. He was swilling the beer round in his glass, thinking it over.

"But what about the girl?" I said. "Why can't you finish a story properly?"

"Phyllis?" He chuckled, and finished his beer. "Phyllis is the patient I've just been to see. Doing well, too. It was a boy. Weighed eight pounds."

"But whom did she marry? Callander, or the secretary chap?"

Morley got up, and struggled into his coat. "Women are rum," he said. "She didn't marry either. She married the captain. I can see now that she's the only possible wife for Jimmy, and he's just the right husband for her. And, you know, it's all my fault. Technically, I suppose I was guilty of nothing more than wrong judgment—because it was, after all, my decision. Actually, I know jolly well that it was something just short of murder. And what's more, I know now I was dead right in doing it." THE END

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LADY IN DISPUTE

Continued from page 19

hands. You played the knave——"

"Sir!"

"Sirrah to you! You played a scoundrel's trick, and this is what I think of it."

O'Connor's arm moved and swung, and he slashed his hunting-cap into Hagan's face; and the face under the blow was as firm as marble.

LORD HAGAN never moved, did not even put hand to his stinging cheek. Except for his eyes, one would think that he was about to break into laughter. He spoke softly. "I know what you want, my countryman. When do we have it?"

"Here and now." O'Connor gestured with his head. "There is space enough, and we can make light enough, and I have brought two English gentlemen to act as our seconds."

Lord Hagan laughed then. "You were very thoughtful, Captain: all arrangements made. I can never deny you after that."

O'Connor turned to the senior of the two. "You will oblige me by acting for Lord Hagan, Lieutenant Farren?"

"I appreciate the honour, Captain O'Connor."

"Ensign May, you will act for me?"

"Happy to," said May briefly.

"Excellent indeed!" approved Lord Hagan. "And since you are in my house, Captain, I yield you choice of weapons. You and your second can decide."

O'Connor decided for himself. "Thank you, my lord! Since I am in your house I choose your own weapon: the small-sword."

"You have spoken your own death sentence, and I knew you would," said Lord Hagan smoothly.

The principals proceeded to opposite ends of the room and the seconds, very punctilious and important, busied themselves. They cleared a space at mid-floor, drew the curtains close, pulleyed the chandelier down, lit its two-score candles, and drew it as high as it would go; and they were particularly careful in choosing, comparing and balancing two brace of small-swords from the wall armoury: supple, delicate, deadly, thrusting weapons, with thirty-four-inch blades, a curved triangle in section, tapering to needle-points.

Thereafter they helped their principals to get ready. Hagan, a neat, poised figure, was in his shirt-sleeves; O'Connor elected to strip to the waist, and the long muscles moved smoothly under the smooth brown hide. Anyone not knowing the reputation of the smaller man would bet his boots that O'Connor would overwhelm him at the first onset.

Just at the end, Gregory May forgot to be formal. His fingers clenched on Garodh's bare forearm.

"Kill the smooth hound for me," he whispered fiercely.

Garodh grinned. "I am something of a coward at bottom," he said, "but even a coward is sometimes fated to be the fifty-second bull or the twelfth man."

The preparations took ten minutes in all. The fight itself lasted a bout and half a bout, say a minute and a half, or even less. And from the beginning it looked as if O'Connor was playing into the better fencer's hands, for he attacked as fiercely, as swiftly, as a four-year-old fighting bull; and Hagan met and foiled the attack as skilfully, as gracefully, as effortlessly as a Joselito. There was the soft stamp and shuffle of feet on the carpet, the yielding and flexing and driving of lithe bodies, the grate and thin cry of steel, and the twisting darting flash as the blades writhed.

That first bout lasted all of a minute, and then O'Connor, keeping the blades engaged, paused and drew two long breaths.

"Neat work, indeed! Again, when you are ready?" invited Hagan, whose breath had scarcely quickened.

"To please you," said O'Connor, and again exploded.

But this bout did not last a minute or half a minute. Like the bull that has learned the game, Garodh snapped his blade free, took one quick stride to the right and a quicker one to the left, and for an instant Hagan's guard was not in place. In that instant O'Connor lunged, his arm a piston and his shoulder driving it, and death went with the point of the sword.

Lord Hagan, deadly to the last, tried to bring his blade to the point. O'Connor knocked it aside with the flat of his left hand, and had that hand round the dying man's shoulders.

"Go with God," he whispered in his ear.

"Better alone, brother," Hagan whispered back, and was dead.

Farren and May dropped their swords and came in hurriedly. Farren said, awe and a trace of horror of death in his voice: "Oh God—oh God! Spitted like a lark."

Very carefully, almost tenderly, they laid the dead man in his winged chair and covered his face with his own square of cambric. O'Connor's chest was lifting and falling, his face was composed to sternness, and there was a bleak sadness in his tone.

"My sorrow and my woe! that is my day's work and it done."

"What else was to be done?" said Farren, eager to convince himself that right had been done.

"I do not know. I never did know." O'Connor gripped their shoulders and drew them close. "Listen! My work is done, but yours is yet to finish. There is a lady and her woman upstairs, a lady of honour, and ye will stand by her in weal or woe. And tonight, this very hour, ye will take her back to her own house in her own carriage."

"You had it all planned like that?" wondered Farren.

"My grief! I saw no other way." He thrust himself into his shirt. "And look, my friends! If there is any question about this and you want me, you will find me at Fahamore—and you will be welcome always."

IT was a fine, salubrious afternoon in latest autumn that Eamon Rice came upon his nephew, Garodh O'Connor, asleep on his back, his hands under his poll, lying under a furze bush on the cliffs of Licken. He had not shaved that day; there were hollows under his cheekbones and dark shades under his eyes, but there was grave strength in the face still. Eamon Rice shook his massive head.

"Taking it hard you are, my foolish lad, and you drinking yourself to the devil and all."

The foolish lad opened his eyes. "You were saying, Uncle Eamon?"

"That a certain one not far from here has not gone to bed sober one night in the last two weeks."

"And why not two more, and two more after that?"

"Very well so!" Uncle Eamon pointed an accusing finger. "Drink away, but I am warning you not to be getting two decent young fellows demoralized. Last night you had Farren and May drunk as fiddlers."

"But you ladled their tumblers

"Now you've got that thing at last, just you listen to me"

yourself, you old rogue, and drank twice as much."

"Leave me out of it, you pup! An old man needs his nourishment." He touched Garodh gently with a toe. "It is not drink you need, Garodh. I know what you need. A woman—a wife and woman in your house and bed."

"That would be two women?"

"A certain one would be enough," hinted Uncle Eamon.

Garodh put a hand over his eyes as if to shade them from the sun that was not shining on them. "Go away! Go away now." he said.

"They tell me the lady is away for Scotland in two days' time."

Garodh did not lift his head. "And where else would she go but to her own Highlands?" he said deeply.

"There are highlands and highlands," said Uncle Eamon, and poked a hunched shoulder. "Look, Garodh! I am riding into town tomorrow. You will ride with me? She was your patient and it would be a fitting and courteous thing for you to wish the lady fare-you-well."

Garodh O'Connor would not lift his head. "I will not ride with you, Uncle Eamon," he said evenly.

"Ride to the devil then!" said Uncle Eamon, and took himself off.

NEXT morning O'Connor was out with his gun, his eyes on a red dog ranging the ground in front. The dog stopped as if about to set and O'Connor brought his gun to the ready. But the dog lifted head, and gave a short interrogative bark. He looked where the dog was looking and it was then he saw the horsewoman.

Her back was three-quarters turned to him, for she was riding down the slope below him. But O'Connor knew who she was. He would know her a mile off, and she was only a hundred paces. She, too, heard the dog and turned in the side-saddle to look up. And she saw the fowler and knew him. Then she looked all round her as if seeking a way of escape. The sea, a wrinkled blue, was below her, and a rock-strewn slope of heather above—no escape either way.

Jean Mathieson turned her mare round and waited for Garodh O'Connor, who, dog at heel, came striding down the slope.

He lifted his cap and came close up to her, and looked up at the woman and, Lord! she was a bonnie woman to be looking at. She was all in black, from her silk cap to the trailing skirt of her riding-habit; but her bronze hair, where it peeped, still shone, and her eyes were bluer and warmer than the sea and for some reason the blood was mantling and ebbing in her face. And her gauntleted hands were tighter on the reins than they need be. He smiled up at her.

"You kept your promise, Lady Jean, and I am glad of that," he said, quietly pleasant.

Her voice was not breathless, just a trace fluttery. "But, Garodh—Captain O'Connor, you were not to see me." She looked down at him and away again, and her heart hurt, he looked so hollow-cheeked. But the calm strength was still there and he was smiling up at her.

Now he laughed. "No, you were not to see me, but I am glad to see you, and you bonnie as the flowers o' May." He gestured with his head. "I mind how you said you would ride out to see if Iveragh was lovelier than Kintail. Maybe it is not?"

"It is very lovely indeed," she admitted, "but I cannot decide until I see Loch Maree."

"And even then you will not be sure. There was also another thing: you were to look at the house of Fahamore——"

"From a distance—and then I was to go away," she said in a low voice.

"Your memory is altogether too good, ma'am," he told her quaintly. "Very well! There is what you call a small brae behind you, on the road you were going. You will permit me to lead you to the head of it?"

"You will lead me in any case," she said, and smiled. The old spirit was not dead yet. It would take the air any minute.

He turned the mare and did not speak again until they were on the head of the brae; then he said: "That is the house of Fahamore."

And she looked down the short slope, and after a while she spoke in Gaelic and in a whisper.

"It is a fine house, Garodh."

It was a fine enough house at that; a rambling, ivy-clad old house, with roofs at many levels and tall chimneys in strange places. It was surrounded, at some distance, by a tall hedge of fuchsia, still flaming. The sea was just below it, an inlet of the bay to make a small harbour, with a short jut of pier, and moored at it a grey, lean Galway hooker, bare masts arake. Behind the house a valley opened out in meadows green with aftergrass and scattered with lime-washed thatched houses; and in the distance the valley narrowed again

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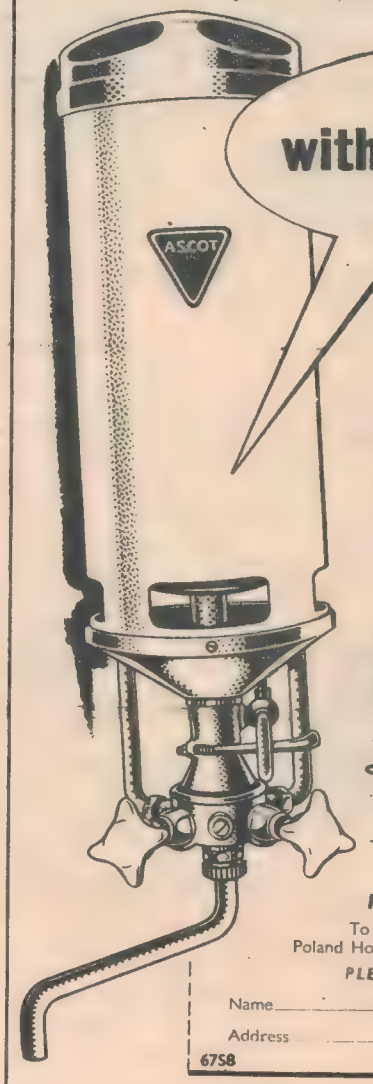

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into a glen that lost itself in a welter of tall brown hills.

Garodh still held the horse's head and the power was strong in him.

"I have a good memory, too, Jean," he said. "There was talk of furnishing and dust—yes, dust, I think! Would a housewifely lady point it out to me and, maybe, trace her name on a table top?"

"You want to show me over your fine house, Garodh?"

"It is what I want, Jean."

"And then you will let me go?"

"My darling lady, this day you are free as air," he said gallantly, "and myself your bonded slave."

So he led her down the slope and through a gate in the fuchsia hedge to the front of the house. Then he showed her the house, all the principal rooms, one after the other.

And finally he ushered her into a room on the ground floor, and it was the eating room—and the drinking—a room heavy in old oak. The expanse of refectory table was not laid, but a small table in a window-bay giving on the harbour was set for two in silver and crystal.

Garodh bowed. "All the times you and I drank tea in your own house. Will you please me in mine, Lady Jean?"

She did please him. But, he noted, she ate hardly at all. There was an ache in her throat that would not let her. She was thinking: *Oh! This splendid Garodh with his fine and gentle manners! And she had hurt him beyond repair—and she was going away tomorrow for ever and ever.*

The power and the wisdom were still in Garodh. He had to do something about this and he did. He filled her glass with a white wine from the south bank of the Loire, and filled his own.

"For want of a better," he said lightly, "we will pledge ourselves."

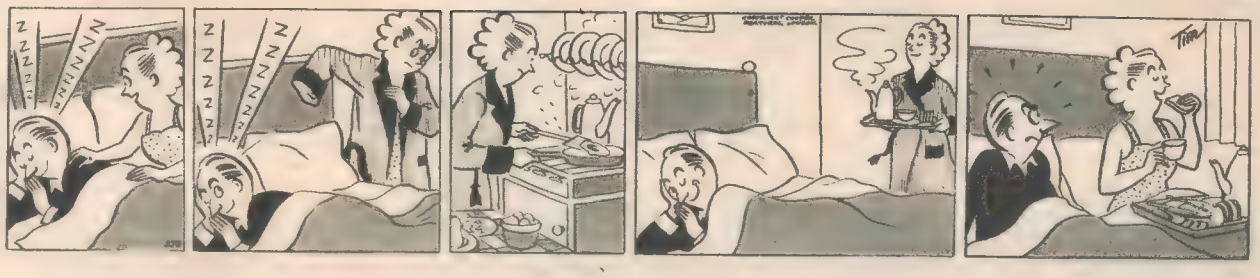
Whether it was the wine or not, an inspired mood came to him, and it tingled in his blood. *Mother o' God! It has to be so.* But he kept tight hold on himself, for he had to put this thing to the test now, but not to the test by questions.

"You will forgive me, Jean?" he said.

"Forgive you, Garodh!" It was herself needed forgiveness.

"For wronging you." He leant

OH, JOHNNY! — *by TIM*



forward and tapped a broad finger-tip lightly on her wrist. "Listen! A certain day you said: 'I came to this house of my own free will.' Of course you did, as you had often gone to drink tea or dine. That is what you meant."

"But you were to take another meaning." She spoke lowly and kept her head down.

"And so I was a fool." He leant back in his chair and considered her downbent head and the blood was beating in his neck. His voice went husky, but he kept it contemplative. "Yes! I think he threatened you—he would threaten you."

She shook her head. "No, Garodh. He did not threaten me."

"No, that was not his way. He said that he would kill me."

"You knew," she whispered.

"I know only now. I know it all. He would not let you go till he had drawn me out to be killed. So you thought you must save my life."

"But he was so deadly," she whispered.

"And so doomed, God ha' mercy on him."

He topped up her glass and refilled his own. And this time he gave her the full toast: "*Slainthe agus saol fadha a's bas in Erinn.*" (Health and long life, and to die in Ireland.)

She met his eye now, but she gave him back only "Slainje," for she had a resolute mind of her own and a resolution in it.

Garodh now was thinking deeply, and let Jean do most of the talking, and she did, for some ease of her own had come to her. And in due course she faced what was in his mind.

"You will let me go now, Garodh? I am for Scotland tomorrow, and this day of farewell I will not forget ever."

Garodh nodded to himself as if he had resolved a problem.

"If Scotland is your road, your road it is," he said. "But look! There is one view—my own view—I want you to see before you go."

So they climbed the hill and they admired the view from the top, and it a splendid view of sea and loch and mountain under sky and sunlight, but, somehow, they were not greatly interested in it that time.

And, having pretended to admire, they went down the other side of the hill.

They came out on a road where it curved, and wide gates opened on a short drive that ran straight to a big square house with a dormer lead roof.

"That is my Uncle Eamon's house of Licken," he told her.

"Your Uncle Eamon is a very fine gentleman," she said.

"Who told you that?"

She started and said: "All the times you spoke of him——"

"I told you that he was a tough-minded, hard-drinking, hard-swearing, law-breaking, long-planning old devil. But all the same and nevertheless he is the finest friend a man ever had, and I would ask you to come up and meet him, and my Aunt Sarah as well, and she is even better. You will please me this last time, Jean?" he said softly, and drew gently on her arm.

She sighed resignedly. "You can do what you like with me today, Garodh," she said, again sadly. "But only this day."

"It is always today," said Garodh.

THEY went up the drive shoulder to shoulder, but not arm in arm. They were only half-way to the house when Eamon Rice and his wife appeared on the steps.

"Wouldn't you think they were expecting us?" said Garodh.

Jean looked at the ground and said nothing.

Garodh put his arm inside hers and slowed their pacing. "I told you a lie back there, Jean Mathieson," he said.

"You never lied to me; Garodh O'Connor."

"I said you were as free as air. You are not, for I will not let you go to Scotland."

Her arm quivered under his and she made her last effort, appeal in her voice. "You must let me go, Garodh. I will not have charity—and I bring bad luck always."

Garodh was firm. "You told me to go away once and once is enough. Wherever you go, I go. That is what you have done to me, Jean Mathieson."

"Have I done that to you, Garodh?"

"That is what you have done, Jean."

And Jean Mathieson changed suddenly. A new confidence was in her voice and a queer mixture of pride and humility.

"You will let me go to Scotland tomorrow, Garodh, but I will come back to you if you want me."

"I have a better plan than that," said Garodh easily, "and we go to Scotland as well. Here we are now!"

Uncle Eamon and Aunt Sara came down the steps, and Garodh presented his lady, who did not know where to look.

"Aunt Sara, this lady is Jean Mathieson, who will be my wife. I bestow her in your care until she is ready to come to Fahamore."

Aunt Sara reached ready arms. "She will be one of my own daughters till that time, and men will learn to keep their places."

And Uncle Eamon rubbed his massive head and wanted to know: "Am I standing on my head or my heels? This is the pleasantest surprise since Brendan found the New Island of America."

And his nephew said witheringly: "You scheming old Turk!" THE END

STIRLING ALBION, GIANT KILLERS

Continued from page 20

of the war. If Fergusson had not been looking for summer grazing for some horses he owned, there might still have been none. His search led him to Annfield, a mansion with seven acres of woodland just outside the town, which was for sale at £5,000. The house itself was no use to him, but he saw that the estate could be a home for a new football club.

With a few friends he raised the money, took possession, formed Stirling Albion F.C. (its registered offices are still at his coal office), and obtained membership of the wartime Eastern League. That was in May, 1945. He had nine weeks in which to transform Annfield and raise a team. Armed with lists of all the professionals granted free transfers by other clubs, Fergusson signed fourteen on a part-time basis, and so achieved the first miracle every football manager dreams about: acquiring a team without paying a penny in transfer fees. Meanwhile, workmen were busy adapting the house, uprooting trees and levelling the ground.

It was a frantic race, and on the night before the opening match the club chairman expressed doubts whether it would be finished in time. "It's got to be," cried Fergusson. "You and I are going to finish it!"

"We did, too," he chuckles. "We were there till nearly midnight laying turves."

Five thousand people turned up to watch the great kick-off. Some were drawn by the novelty, but the team showed obvious promise in winning easily, and many of the 5,000 became regular supporters.

When football resumed its prewar constitution, Fergusson applied for membership of the Scottish League Division B in place of King's Park. League officials, immune to the infection of his enthusiasm, said the new club would have to justify itself by gaining promotion from Division C.

Stirling Albion answered this challenge by winning both the League and the Divisional cup with the loss of only one game. It was received into Division B without further comment and won promotion to Division A at the second attempt.

Fergusson suffered his greatest disappointment when the team finished at the bottom of the A League and was sent back to Division B. Now, after only one season, that blot has been eradicated and he is happy again—but determined there shall be no more slips.

His formula remains today as it was at the start: buy players as cheaply as possible and treat them well so that they will respond with their best. That is why Stirling has performed wonders with players discarded by so many rival clubs. With the exception of the assistant trainer, every member of the staff is on a part-time basis. Players are free to earn as much as they like outside football. The trainer is physiotherapist at the infirmary, and the secretary is a schoolteacher.

Another Fergusson idea is to have women operators at all the turnstiles. He says men are more civil to them and so there are fewer disputes; in addition, because they have little interest in the game, women have more interest in their job.

Not long ago another club offered him £1,000 a year to become its manager. Surprised by his refusal, the club asked how much he was getting as manager of Albion. "Nothing," said Tom. Then he explained that Stirling Albion was his hobby and its success was his main ambition.

Despite the success achieved so far, Fergusson and Albion are not one hundred per cent popular in Stirling itself. Some people dislike his habit of telling them exactly what he thinks; others consider it "not quite nice" that professional football should be played in what was once somebody's garden.

Fergusson cares little for the personal shafts, and has one crushing rebuke that silences most of the critics of his team. "Albion is one of the few thriving industries to come to Stirling in the last fifty years," he points out.

He refrains from mentioning that the biggest local success story of the lot is probably that of Tom Fergusson himself. THE END

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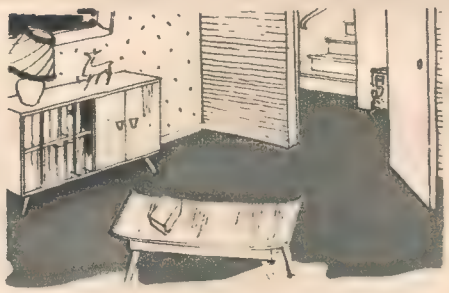

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PATIENT TRIO BEHIND THE ARMY'S NEW RIFLE

Continued from page 17

projectile leaves the barrel. Hance, the expert on metals, had to make sure that the materials of which the rifle would be made would stand up to these forces. Janson did the reckoning to determine that the barrel would not get so hot that its heat would explode a cartridge without the trigger being pressed. The arms experts call this "cooking a round," and a weapon that does this can be just as dangerous to the user as to an enemy.

More Shots On Targets

"Another problem was making sure the rifle would not fire too fast," Kent-Lemon says. "We wanted a light weapon, but we had to consider the fact that if certain parts were light, the rifle would tend to fire too quickly. What we wanted was a high rate of single *aimed* shots. The automatic feature on the EM 2 is just an extra."

Infantrymen equipped with the EM 2 will be able to get off three or four times the number of rounds possible with the current bolt-operated service rifle. The increased fire-power is achieved by using a magazine containing twenty rounds and the self-loading design.

After six months of theoretical calculation, interspersed with lunch-hour darts, the team began to produce drawings. According to Alfred Christian, the leading draughtsman on the project, some 500 drawings were made, each of which had to be checked three times. Some of these were of small parts drawn ten times their actual size to make sure that everything would work smoothly when the first model was built.

The EM 2 was built by what Kent-Lemon calls the "knife-and-fork method." Skilled craftsmen at Enfield made it almost literally by hand. Special tools were designed and gradually the carefully drawn sketches of parts for the new rifle took shape. Eighteen months after they had started the project, the team took the original model to the ranges.

It was set up in a special holder and a string tied to the trigger. At a safe distance—in case calculations had been in error—Janson pulled the string to fire the EM 2 for the first time. "It was a thrill," he says. "It is perhaps once in thirty years that a man designs a gun and it is accepted."

As soon as the first EM 2 had been fired, the team pulled it apart. They peered at each part through microscopes, took the pieces into laboratories and checked them for signs of strain or distortion. Actually, on its first firing the bolt came back more violently than the inventors expected, but this was a simple matter to correct.

"It is comparatively easy to make one weapon," Kent-Lemon says. "The next stage was to make sure we had a rifle that could be mass-produced. In mass production you cannot get the same degree of precision as you can for an individually made firearm. We called in the production experts and discussed how tools, jigs and fittings could be made so that the rifle could be turned out in quantity."

Frozen, It Still Fires

Meanwhile, more hand-made models of the EM 2 were produced for further testing. The weapon was submitted to a series of tortures to find out how much ill-usage it could stand.

The precious models—each is worth fifty times the price of a mass-produced weapon—were put in cold chambers where the temperature went as low as sixty degrees below zero. They were taken out, covered with frost, and fired. "It is the only

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by ROFFE THOMPSON

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That's what a £500 success means to this thirty-eight year old local government officer. But this week *you* can win twice as much for a *Bullet*. Yes, for two, three or four well-chosen words on the coupon below, your reward in our August Tournament can be as much as *one thousand pounds* in solid cash. See that entry is posted by Monday, August 20 and *Bullets* biggest prize of 1951 can sweep your troubles away!

Here's reader A. Baker, who won £500 plus Riviera holiday for two. "When my wife telephoned the glorious news," he said, "I could hardly believe my ears!"

Continued from next column

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Continued in previous column

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The most meritorious of the First Prize "Bullets" in Contests 1,795, 1,796, 1,797 and 1,798 will bring its sender £1,000 CASH—a £350 First Prize plus £650 Championship Bonus.

£350 First Prize, £50, £25, 2 of £10, 5 of £5, 10 of £2.10s.

50 of 10s., 2,000 "Good Shots"

"Sunday Feast" Bonuses

Whole Roast Chicken and 2 lb. delicious Ham (both tinned) accompany each of the 20 chief prizes won with *Bullet* which was one of four or more on single coupon or plain-paper entry sheet.

RULES 1. First Prize for best *Bullet* received. Others in order of merit—the test is of cleverness, aptness and originality.

2. Editor undertakes that all *Bullets* received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent Adjudicators.

3. As entry-fee, enclose P.O. or stamps as indicated on coupon. Fee submitted will be taken to cover *Bullets* in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain-paper entries are allowed. If using P.O. make payable to JOHN BULL, cross /& Co./, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated. Forces half-rate for *Bullets* and Crosswords for entry-fees not exceeding 2s. if coupons personally completed and Service rank indicated.

4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that results of this week's Contests in *Bulletin* and *Gazette*, dated Sept. 8, and in JOHN BULL, dated Sept. 15, also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding. Odhams' employees (and families) ineligible.

Add 2, 3 or 4 Words to any of these "EXAMPLES"

To make a *Bullet*, add simply TWO, THREE or FOUR words of apt and original comment to any of the *Examples* below. To use an incomplete *Example*, first complete it with any one word in place of dotted line—then make your *Bullet* as usual.

Brighter Future
Russia's Harvest
The Hard Way
Home's His Castle, But
Drilled And Disciplined
Less Trouble
The Great God, Football
Still Struggling
On The Precipice Edge
Prophet Of Woe
No Gentleman
Tame
To Recapture Her Youth
Round The Clock
Village Parson
In An Endless Stream
Dad's Handiwork
Cemented
Any Fool
Like A Nagging Tooth

Incomplete "Examples"—see instructions

If You Can .....
Not Worth .....
Mrs. Mop's .....
Didn't Hear The.....
.....Together
One Of The.....Kind

NOTE.—You may enclose *Bullets* and Xword entries in same envelope covered by single P.O. for combined entry-fee. Mark envelope "Combined," top left-hand corner.

POST ENTRY

"Bullets" 1,796 (or Xword 748), "John Bull," Long Acre, London, W.C.2 (Comp.)

ANOTHER £1,000 Tournament Offer Next Week!

EXAMPLE ..... 6d.

BULLET

EX ..... 6d.

B.

EX. ..... 6d.

B.

EX. ..... } EXTRA TWO FOR 6d.

B.

EX. ..... }

B }

Closing Postmark **1,796** MON., AUG. 20

I agree to Rules and enclose P.O. Value.....

No.....

Signed.....

Address.....

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NEW "MILLIONAIRE LUXURY" OFFER—GET YOUR "BULLETIN"

With this coupon (which you can enclose with your entry) send P.O. 1s. for six weeks' *Bulletin* and *Gazette* at REDUCED SERIES RATE—first copy dated September 1. If requiring single copy only, affix 2½d. stamp below.

P.O. 1s. No.....

For Introductory copy of *Bulletin* and *Gazette* dated September 1 **STICK 2½d. STAMP HERE**

NAME.....

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609

CASH AND HOLIDAYS FOR XWORDS!

This Way To Win

FIRST complete Square in INK, giving your Answers to Clues below. Then, if you wish to enter *one* extra Answer to any *one, two or three* Clues, give each such word in full in "Extra Answer" Form below Crossword Square.

Across Clues **XWORD 748**

1. Often looks a bit worn after bargain sale
3. Many greedy people think chiefly about
5. A naval commander's tactics may have to be modified because of
7. It's only human that a man cheat if necessary to save his
12. Many a housewife's work is made a little lighter by this
13. Is found very useful by farmer
14. Heavy this tends to reduce a man's appetite

Down Clues

1. Countryman doesn't let these worry him much
2. Are looked on by some people as more stupid than anything else
4. May well be an embarrassment to young beginner attending ballet classes
6. Theatre owes something to
8. Though plain, may be remarkably attractive
9. Watch is commonly kept on this
10. One can often tell you when dish is properly cooked
11. After drought, soil often appears this

£100

1st Prize plus SEASIDE WEEK for TWO

If First Prize is shared by two readers, *both* will receive Holiday for Two Award. Cash to winners unable to take Holiday in 1951 or 1952.

AWARDS VALUE £25

amongst 1st Runners-up and up to 50 FOOD PARCELS

Useful extras for larder with each Runners-up Award value 10s. or over—also valuable 52-WEEK XWORD SEASON TICKET if parcel won with entry value not less than 2s. Up to 500 "Signpost" Prizes for 2nd Runners-up.

XWORD 743 RESULT

WINNING WORDS. ACROSS: 3, Folds. 5, Will. 8, Sick. 11, Hurt. 13, Ropes. 14, Loss. DOWN: 1, Gipsy. 2, Blood. 3, Fowl. 4, Stuck. 6, Quilt. 7, Mutter. 9, Jug. 10, Hull. 12, Dogs.

EIGHT £100 SHARERS (entries differing at one point only from Competitors' Answers above): A. J. R. Cartwright, Weybridge; L. Cope, Bath; E. Day, Gosport; E. I. Kirkman, Shrewsbury; C. C. Lawrence, Market Drayton; F. McDermott, Wrexham; Mrs. M. Poole, Sheffield; Lieut. P. B. Taylor, R.E.M.E., Shrivenham.

For entries differing at two points only, 69 entrants share awards value £25 for 1st Runners-up. Useful "Signpost" Prizes to 2nd Runners-up.

WIN £100 and SEASIDE WEEK with this coupon

In adjudication, all Extra Answers will be read in combination with each other and with all Answers in your Square. Thus your completed Square with one extra Answer to *one* Clue will represent *two* full Squares (Entry-fee 6d.). Square with one extra Answer to *two* Clues will represent *four* full Squares (Entry-fee 1s.) and Square with one extra Answer to *three* Clues will represent *eight* full Squares (Entry-fee 2s.). Use ink not pencil.

Single Square with 6d. P.O. or stamps covers dispatch to you of *Crossword Gazette* dated Sept. 1.

Winner—sender of most meritorious set of Answers received—decided by Adjudication Committee on basis of aptness and accuracy. Ties divide. Entrants limited to one prize per Contest and to entry requiring not more than 4s. entry-fee. Signature indicates agreement to Rules.

1 S	T		F	2 F	■	3	E	L	4 F
T	O	■	5 F	O	■	■	V	I	E
	■	6	■	■	■	7	I	D	E
L	O	U	D	L	Y	■	C	■	
E	■	S	■	S	O	8 F	T	Y	■
S	9 W	E	■	■	N	A	■	A	■
■	■	■	10	■	■	■	M	11 A	
H	I	■	12 P	O	■	E	R	■	■
A	S	■	P	O	■	■	I	C	I
13 S	T	■	C	K	748	14	O	O	D

CLUE	EXTRA ANSWER	Total Fee
No.		6d.
No.		1s.
No.		2s.

(Total fee shown includes entry on Square)

Puzzle and Form strictly copyright **748** Closing Postmark MON., AUG. 20

I enclose P.O. value..... No.....

Signed.....

Address.....

.....

Assault Course Test

Three months ago, the Army selected at random a group of sixteen National Servicemen. They were each given an EM 2 rifle and another new-style rifle. The group had a fortnight in which to try out the two types. They went on the range, over assault courses and through bayonet fighting drill. The result of this consumers' free trial was a majority decision in favour of the EM 2.

After eighteen months of tests, the War Office announced: "The wounding power or incapacitating effect of the .280 is ample to fulfil requirements, and its powers of penetration at the limits of range required are considerably better than the .303 inch.

"Despite these attributes, the recoil produced when fired from the light rifle is substantially less than that of the .303 inch fired from the existing service rifle.

"The rate of fire of the individual soldier will be at least three or four times greater than before. The functioning of the new rifle is more dependable in adverse conditions of dust and mud, extremes of climate, than that of any comparable weapon in use.

"It is better than the present service rifle when fired for accuracy at all service ranges. It is robust and will withstand the full rigours of fighting with the bayonet, and yet is considerably easier to handle than the existing service rifle."

The adoption of the EM 2 will undoubtedly make the British infantryman the most formidably armed fighting man. The EM 2 will also probably relegate the Sten gun to a rôle of guard duty in rear areas. In the British Army of the future, the Bren will lose some of its importance. Its calibre will be altered to .280 inches and the Vickers machine gun may also be adapted to the same type of round.

Others Will Follow

As the EM 2 goes into production, the original model is to be mounted in a glass case on the light green walls of Kent-Lemon's office. Down the corridor, there will still sound the thud of darts piercing a cork target as the designers relax from their work of creating a whole new range of weapons to join the EM 2 rifle.

Occasionally, Kent-Lemon thinks back to the incident that sent him to Enfield. A Regular Army officer, invalided out during the first World War, he rejoined for the second war. "They put me in charge of a howitzer, mounted on a railway truck," he recalls. "I took it out and fired it. Then I took it all apart. I talked the Navy into making some new parts to improve the buffer system. When the Army found out, they either had to court martial me or send me here. I've been at Enfield ever since." THE END

I MET THEM ALL AT THE SAVOY

Continued from page 9

information, but the faithful eyes never wavered, the gentle voice never broke, and in the dawn of the Sunday before Easter he was placed against the wall of his prison and shot.

It was a year before we knew about that. Then a little old lady, trimly dressed and with neat tight curls, came into my office and announced herself as Picchi's landlady; she had, she said, been notified of his death and she had called about some belongings of his in the hotel. Her name was Mrs. Florence Lantieri.

When I heard the full story I was desperately anxious that it should become widely known, not only as tribute to brave little Picchi but also because it was a matter of pride to the hotel and the rest of the staff that one of their number—and, indeed, one of those very Italians whose presence had been questioned—should have died so heroically. First came the formal tribute of a brief death notice in *The Times*:

PICCHI—On Palm Sunday, 1941, Fortunato Picchi sacrificed his life for the cause of freedom. A brave man of high ideals. Until the day breaks, dear—F.

R.I.P.

To ensure the widest possible circulation of the facts I next sent a paragraph to the news agencies drawing attention to *The Times* announcement and adding enough detail to indicate to any wide-awake news editor that there was more to the story. As I had anticipated, my phone was soon ringing. I was beginning to learn in my job that it was much better to let editors scent out for themselves the possibilities in such a story than to try any "high-powered" salesmanship. As a result, Picchi's fate became very widely known and honour was given where it was due.

Hotel Was "Invaded"

The anxious moments that accompanied the affair of the Italian waiters were to be duplicated many times in the years that followed. There were the two Communist-inspired "invasions," and there was the strike which seemed to be timed to coincide with Princess Elizabeth's wedding.

In addition to handling the Press Relations angle of these, I had also to cope with the Savoy's own restrictions, which made it impossible for me to mention many extraordinary events at the time. For instance, although as Press Relations Officer I was entitled to enter the hotel by the front doors, which are normally banned to the staff, and allowed to entertain guests in the restaurant or bar, I was not permitted to have photographs taken in any of the public rooms (a fact which I discovered when I tried to have a picture taken of Ivor Novello dining with Greta Garbo). I could not at the time mention any of the private parties that the two Princesses gave in the hotel, nor breathe a word of how an American columnist came to the rescue when Prince Philip almost lost his voice on the eve of the wedding.

Indeed, the story of Royalty and the Savoy is a chapter in itself.

NEXT WEEK: Gaiety of a Princesses' party. We celebrate a Royal wedding

This series is based on Jean Nicol's book, "Meet Me At The Savoy," to be published by Museum Press in the late autumn at 15s.

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